THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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WHO IS TO BLAME?

THE COMMONWEAL published in its issue for January 4 an editorial article entitled "Nineteen Thirty-three," which promptly called forth from its readers an unusually large number of comments, of exceptional interest and importance. The letters came from many states—New York, Connecticut, Iowa, Minnesota and Ohio. A few were from clergymen, but by far the greatest number were from laymen. If published simultaneously, they would fill many pages of our space. Several ran from one thousand to fifteen hundred words in length. Each and every one so far received (for day by day new ones are arriving) has been well written, clearly expressed, thoughtfully composed, full of a most evident sincerity. A brief quotation from one of them will indicate the general agreement of all the letters from the laymen, and will reveal the dilemma of THE COMMONWEAL when considering the question of their publication. The quotation is as follows:

"I hope that this letter of mine does not seem to read as a 'denunciation' of the clergy! Or to be tinged with 'anti-clericalism,' which indeed is far from my mind. I am simply expressing thoughts which I have heard in private conversation with Catholic men of good education and with an alert social conscience, of Catholic women, members of their diocesan woman's councils, of a few priests wide awake to the signs of the times. I think it would be a very fine thing if the correspondence columns of THE COMMONWEAL were thrown open to a full discussion of these urgent matters, and that no attempt be made to censor any letter no matter how 'radical' it may seem to the conservative eye. To know the mind of our people is a most important thing."

A further quotation from the same letter will tell better than words of our own why its writer deemed it proper to disavow any imputation of "anticlericalism." It reads as follows:

"My copy of THE COMMONWEAL arrived this afternoon, and it was with great interest that I read the leading editorial with its vital quotations from American and English clerical editors, about the apparent lassitude of the English and American Catholic laity regarding Catholic Action in the full sense of that word. There is no doubt that this criticism is quite just. And, as you state, that the Catholic laity is not responding in any measure commensurate with the perils which face the Church.

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"But, I query, is this entirely the laity's fault? Is it not in great part due to the lassitude of the clergy? Are our Catholic men and women taught from Sunday to Sunday what their duties as Catholics are regarding social and political and economic reform, for instance, from the pulpits of our churches? Do we hear the iniquities of our present capitalistic society rigorously denounced by American Catholic priests as they were denounced in the great encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI? Is there not a great deal of timidity among the clergy in denouncing political corruption and social injustice? Can one name more than a half-dozen priests in this country who have fearlessly taken the side of the working men and women of America in the great social struggle between those who 'have' and those who 'have not?' Have the clergy in America done, for instance, what Father Mellaerts did with his great Boerenbund in Belgium, a Catholic league of farm laborers, with its half million members, its seven hundred odd savings banks, its far-reaching agricultural works? And yet we hear on all sides complaints of Catholic conditions in rural life? Have the American clergy here given the laymen a lead?"

Every one of the other letters from laymen raises the same issue. In varying degrees of pungency they attribute the major blame for the general ineffectiveness of Catholic Action to the clergy. One of them puts the case very bluntly. "You do not point out what seems to me the important reason why the majority, the great majority, of Catholic men and women do not take a more active part in Catholic Action. That reason is: the non-activity of the clergy, which, in turn, causes non-activity on the part of the laity. When I say 'non-activity' of the clergy . . . I mean their failure to preach to the laity the doctrines of the Church more fully and completely, such as the logical and practical consequences of the social teachings of recent Popes on the labor question. . . ."

Page after page of such statements might be given—which brings us to the dilemma mentioned above, namely, the question of the publication in full of these and similar letters. We of THE COMMONWEAL desire to face facts. We do not desire to dodge uncomfortable issues. We know that a most plausible case may be made out for giving full publicity to such issues. To do so is often considered to be the most useful function of journalism. It is a dilemma that, rightly or wrongly, we of THE COMMONWEAL can only avoid (we confess that we do not solve it) by deciding against the publication in full of these letters. They prove again what for years has been known to us, the fact, namely, that a considerable section of the Catholic laity—including some chronic fault-finders, but also including men and women who are of true apostolic metal—*are hampering and delaying* Catholic Action by blaming the clergy for lack of leadership, instead of assuming leadership in lines of work fully open to them as laymen.

Even if all their complaints were true—and that a part of the criticism is justifiable may be admitted: and in fact it is admitted by leading representatives of the clergy itself—such facts in no way excuse the laity for not participating fully in many forms of Catholic Action already functioning, or in creating new developments when and where such seem to be needed. Saint Francis was a layman when he raised and led the mightiest army of Catholic Action ever known. So was Saint Ignatius a layman when he organized the Company of Jesus. Was not Ozanam a layman when, under the patronage of Saint Vincent de Paul, he launched his great crusade? Scores of other names of laymen and lay women might be cited—leaders, or devoted lieutenants of lay or clerical leaders, in various forms of Catholic Action. The layman or the lay woman is, has always been, and will always be, as fully and completely a member of the Church—a member of that mystical body of Christ which is the Church—as any ecclesiastic, so far as initiating or taking part in true forms of Catholic Action is concerned. He or she may now, as always, "coöperate with the hierarchy"; for that is Catholic Action. But mere criticism or condemnation of this or that alleged or real failure of the clergy, is not and never can be true Catholic Action. To spread such condemnations or criticisms at large in our pages, at a time when every word we print should be a word of real action—for which action, as we view the matter, there is a practically unlimited field—would be to spend our precious time in debating who is to blame for our own failure to act as Catholics. There can be two answers to such a debate. Catholic laymen never can prove themselves right in refraining from truly manifesting their faith by pointing out the failures of the clergy. If we laymen put our own portion of the House of God in order, we shall accomplish that task which is properly our own.

WEEK BY WEEK

THE SUDDEN and quite unexpected death of Mr. Calvin Coolidge naturally suggests a comparison between the halcyon years of his Presidency and the troubled season through which we are passing. Qualities best exemplified during his tenure of office—thrift, bold venturing into the realms of international finance and trade, confidence in the ultimate benefits of free capitalism—are now under fire. But there can be no doubt that he was genuinely and representatively American. The simplicity of his life and manners was sometimes misinterpreted. In private Mr. Coolidge was, as many a newspaperman has cause to remember, a good and affable conversationalist by no means devoid of sprightliness or wit and amiably free of conceits. There was Vermont granite in him, but Vermont homeliness and comfort—we had almost said sap of the maple—as well. It is interesting from our point of view to recall that the very first COMMONWEAL editorial was addressed to Mr. Coolidge, just

Mr. Coolidge

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then elected President of his country. At that time we said: "Our national roots cling to simple faith in the coöperation of God and man for the common weal, from the nobly stern Puritans of New England, of whom Mr. Coolidge is a descendant, to the fervent Catholic founders of Maryland who first wrote religious liberty into a colonial charter, from the God-fearing and loyal Jew, to the childlike faith of the black. So long as we hold fast to these roots, we cannot engulf ourselves in that overweening pride of self, that colossal ego of the would-be superman which is the conspicuous moral disease of the world today." For Mr. Coolidge, the nation and its spirit were always infinitely more important than himself or his opinions.

NOTHING said in a long while has encouraged us more than Mr. Frank A. Vanderlip's recent radio address in behalf of the Home Mortgage Advisory Board. After a realistic analysis of the interest on indebtedness which must be borne by a relatively impoverished country, he said: "I assemble these facts because I believe they indicate, in the present low state of our national income, that more is required for taxes and interest payments than will be feasible in the immediate future to devote to these purposes. That means that we must awake to the probability that measures may have to be taken which will seem radical in the light of our belief in the sanctity of financial contracts." Among these measures Mr. Vanderlip stresses three: the reduction of interest rates on outstanding mortgages, lowering of taxes on real property especially where the owner's income has dried up, and the financing of new mortgages with government assistance where those now in force have matured. To be sure there are constitutional and other obstacles in the way. But Mr. Vanderlip is not the man to endorse a proposal which must by its very nature remain dangling in the thin air of theory. Realizing that a national emergency exists, he has pointed the shortest and safest way to improvement.

Sound Doctrine

THE PROBLEM is simple, tragic and inescapable. About $45,000,000,000 are owed on urban and farm real estate throughout the nation. This means that nearly $3,000,000,000 a year must be paid out by property owners as interest. The annual tax bill presented to the same owners is about as much. And if there is anybody now living who imagines that so much money is being raised or will be raised, he happens to be ignorant of conditions. The fact of the matter is that interest and tax defaults are slowly but surely eating away the ranks of home and farm owners. That is an appalling social catastrophe, nothing more or less than transformation of an individualistic society into a proletariat. Thousands upon thousands are being shunted every day out of the sturdy consuming class into the class of despoiled poor. Meanwhile property itself declines in value for want of buyers. As equity after equity is lost in small homes, whole residential communities are driven to accept the skeleton first-mortgage value of a given piece of property. Naturally a decline in interest charges would involve losses to banks and insurance companies. But it is at last clear that they suffer even more from the rabid disease which omnipresent foreclosure is. The very underpinning upon which all their business depends—the borrowing and purchasing power of the people—is gradually weakening to the point of serious danger. At this late date in the progress of the depression, it is evident that the one way out is a reduction of the cost of money all along the line. We congratulate Mr. Vanderlip.

THE PHILIPPINE independence bill calls for vigorous opposition. Inspired by the worst kind of backfire imperialism, it is unfair both to the natives and to the United States. Briefly stated, the chief provisions of the bill are these: during the next ten years, imports from the Philippines are to be placed on a quota basis, all products sold in addition bearing increasingly heavy taxes and duties; exports from this country are, however, to enter the islands duty free; and "perpetual neutralization" is to be guaranteed by hypothetical international treaties. The sole object of this bill is to cut down Philippine trade in sugar, cocoanut oil and fibrous materials. During the past few years the effect of this trade has been to make of the islands a heavy economic liability—at least in so far as some American interests are concerned—rather than an asset. The time has therefore come, we are told, to grant the Filipinos what they have always desired, the right to determine their own destiny. As the bill stands, however, they are by no means given this right. An economic plant largely equipped and developed by Americans is to be in great measure scrapped; and a "neutralization" agreement, which of course means what it says, is to prevent the Filipinos from eventually joining hands with some other power. The eventual result of these measures can only be pauperization and chaos. We believe that the problem which we so jauntily shouldered in 1896 cannot be solved with honor in this easy and callous fashion. One aspect of the question which cannot be ignored is that the Filipinos, so largely a Catholic people, deserve the vigilant sympathy of Catholics in the United States. The Church in this country must be at least as interested in their welfare as was the Church of Spain.

A Vicious Proposal

MUCH about the United States is bad, stupid and ridiculous, but anybody who has looked around a bit realizes that the spirit of the nation is warm with generosity in a manner that none other is. Americans have retained, in spite of everything, a definite pioneer readiness to help others. One way in which this has been manifested is the "Share the Work Movement" directed by Mr. Walter C. Teagle.

Mr. Teagle's Endeavors

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At first, we shall confess, our attitude toward this idea was rather sceptical. While industry and business were laying off employees right and left, it seemed hard to believe that employers and workers could be induced to coöperate in sharing jobs. But though the "movement" has by no means ended the bitterness and penury resulting from unemployment, it has persuaded more than 5,000 firms to sponsor job sharing in one form or other. Mr. Teagle himself has no set rules. In one case, he holds, the thing can be done quite differently from what is possible in another case. The estimate is that three and a half million people have been kept at work as a result, though to be sure the total earnings in many of these cases are just enough to cover the bare necessities of life. In an article written for the New York *Herald Tribune,* Mr. Teagle comments particularly upon the willingness of employees to take a pay-cut "as a donation." But the energy and far-sightedness of the firms endorsing the movement cannot be too highly complimented. Among them are some of the largest industries in the country.

When April Comes

A FEW minor problems remain, such as discovering the meaning of "joule" and "erg," making two jobs grow where none grew before, and finding a formula that satisfies everyone on the war debts. But one major necessity, at least, has now been taken care of. Mr. Shaw is coming to America. This has been brought about, seemingly, by the expedient of not urging him to do so. For years there has been a ferment of offers and pleas to the Great Iconoclast, all directed to the general end of getting him over here, and all productive of choice insults from him by way of refusal. Now (the editors are not privy to Mr. Shaw's correspondence, of course, and speak merely from current indications in the newspapers)—now that we have settled down, in a mood of melancholy resignation, to doing without him, the felicity is to be granted us, after all, and he will (according to a cable just publicized in the press) be here in April. Do we detect a compensating sternness, after this heart-warming condescension, in the announcement that he will stop in New York only twenty-four hours, and deliver only one lecture here? We hope he will reconsider. How can he transact his business with New York in a single day? There is the play, "Foolscap," all about Shaw and Pirandello and Shakespeare in (we believe) an insane asylum, to see and comment on; what the comment will be we do not know, not being Shaw, but we cannot, in the various circumstances, imagine one not being made. There are his producers, the Theatre Guild, of whom he has said that they are, one and all, half superior persons and half exasperating idiots, in relation to whom he must make some sort of public gesture; and public gestures take time. There are the speakeasies, the policemen and the skyscrapers to deal with, and there are our city politics to rectify. Then, there are a good many Jews in New York, and in view of his late message to that race, it is very likely that they will take the initiative in resuming relations, of some sort, even if he does not. There are Communist clubs to cheer on their way, and Irish Catholics to twit. These, with music and prize-fighting, form the bare minimum of what he will have to see to, once he gets here. He had better make it a week.

A German Builder

DR. WILHELM CUNO, whose recent death is reported to have been caused by overwork, is the only post-war German statesman to have been well known in the United States. His familiarity with and interest in conditions here resulted largely from his work to restore German shipping and his ability to secure American coöperation for this enterprise. The story of how the Hamburg-American Line started from scratch after 1918 and again became one of the world's important maritime companies is, of course, a modern business romance. Characteristic was the "genuineness" of everything done: ships and men alike had little flash or glitter, but the performance of both was absolutely dependable. As Chancellor of the German Republic, Dr. Cuno was much less fortunate. He took office largely because of his financial experience, at a time when the German effort to find a way betwen overwhelming reparations payments and business recovery had led to inflation. This was only intensified by Dr. Cuno's use of "passive resistance" against the French invasion of the Ruhr. Perhaps no other measure could have convinced the rest of the world that the Reich was in desperate straits. Even so, normalcy did not begin to return until the advent of Stresemann and the exchange of resistance for coöperation.

Fresh Philosophers

MRS. NICHOLAS F. BRADY, chairman of the board of directors of the Girl Scouts—a big job, surely!—and chairman of the Women's Division of the National Committee on the Mobilization of Relief and Welfare—certainly a colossal job in these times!—and a generous official and unofficial power in various socially useful enterprises, is also sponsoring at the Carroll Club for Catholic girls in New York a series of lectures on the Philosophy of Religion. We are great believers in adult education. Of course this is something that has always existed, and has currently been given a handy name. It is at first a rather amazing, and touching, sight for one newly in contact with it, to see how anxious and happy people who have left school and college behind still are to have opportunities to seek knowledge. We are far from new at witnessing this phenomenon, but we could be amazed at the numbers of young, fresh—in the good sense of the word—and even giddy looking girls who turned out for the course on the Philosophy of Religion the other night. As they arrived, there was pleasant pandemonium, laughter, life, a little shov-

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ing, and soon the large ball room of the Carroll Club seating several hundred was filled. Girls still streamed in and before long they were bulging over the edge of the balcony. Folding-doors were thrown open to an adjoining room, and new arrivals poured in there. Father Fulton J. Sheen, professor of philosophy at the Catholic University of America, spoke brilliantly on the proofs of the existence of God; the argument from the order in the universe, Aristotle's proof from motion, and the argument from the fundamental psychological cravings for life, truth and love. We were deeply moved not only by the lecturer but also by the audience. This engaging specific instance of the quest for truth was a renewal of our vision of what is being done extensively by brave sponsors to keep the sources of information available in our times for the many who are eager to profit by them. In a period when materialism, which so recently was claiming its faithful on the score of the plenty it provided, is now making converts with even greater rapidity because stark need has overtaken us, there is particular necessity for remembering that life is a matter of more than bread alone. This can be of tragic importance, as well as it can be, as it was the other night, delightfully realized.

Solitaries of the Sea

THERE are of course many solutions for all sorts of things. Some persons think there are too many and that this very number is in itself a problem. It may easily be seen that this becomes cumulative. Here is where we believe the wooden walls should not be, as they were for the Athenians, the last resort against the impingement of other people's ideas filling the sky like a flight of arrows. Resourcefulness of human energy put to the test can be very refreshing. We see instances of this in the narratives of Captains Slocum and Fleming Day and Fenger. We are mentioning men of our own times because they at least seem more credible. Gerbault, who first sailed single-handed the Atlantic Ocean from east to west, was three months on the way. Pidgeon, the quiet, small man who built himself a thirty-foot sailing boat in his back yard, without previous experience at such work, then launched it and with an admirable circumspection managed to have the winds waft him completely around the world alone, is a standing example to wives of what is latent in their husbands.

THEN there is the Latvian boy still in his teens who crossed once to these shores with his slightly older brother in a small, and none too new, sloop, and who, if memory serves, has repeated the voyage single-handed. Now, having opened our newspaper this morning, we discovered buried in a small paragraph almost submerged by columns of plans for those of us who insist on staying in the crowded places, mention of a man aptly named Fred Rebell who has just put in safely at San Pedro, California, after sailing 8,000 miles from Sydney, Australia, in an eighteen-foot skiff which has only an oiled canvas canopy over the open cockpit, a beam of but five feet and a maximum height above water of twenty inches. He came by way of Honolulu, learned navigation in a public library, made his own sextant and had two dollar-watches for chronometers. Such men prove nothing perhaps, other than the individual's capacity for adventure; and that may be not a bad thing.

LOOKING BACKWARD

THE SILHOUETTE of 1932 is now revealed in the light of the whole human past—that sum-total of effort, progress, collapse, aspiration and sin which is the record of man's wrestling bout with his destiny. From one point of view, a quite especial grandeur characterizes the year. Never before has the whole race been so nearly what may be termed a collective unit, struggling everywhere against the same impending disasters and meeting with the same results. The world was astonishingly "one" in 1932, so far as social, economic, financial and moral problems were concerned. That is an impressive, almost tragic fact. We have all lived through the greatest famine in history, created not by any lack of food or other supplies but by the complete breakdown of the devices, which once promised to provide everyone with work and wages.

But though this unity cannot be denied, the picture of the year is nevertheless one of the most amazing diversity. The problems were everywhere the same; the solutions offered were almost always in conflict one with the other. Renascent nationalism and imperialism resembled waves rising to angry crests. The religion of the Church, which is Christ living on in a communion open to all men, watched the growth of rival creeds based on despair and hostility to injustice. Economic remedies suggested here met the bitter hostility of those offering different prescriptions. A move made to repair one part of the financial machine operative in industry seemed to bring about the weakening of another part. It became apparent that the structure which towered so high only a few years ago had been built of illusions and shams. Perhaps only the Tower of Babel toppled with a more resounding crash.

And yet, strangely enough, the outcome of all this harrowing experience is a restoration of hope. People face the beginning new year with a genuine conviction that improvement is bound to come. This conviction is in part justified by its modesty. No one any longer expects the things to which, less than four Januarys ago, he believed himself normally entitled. Now there is merely the jubilant feeling that the destroying forces have completed their work. Wealth destined to be lost has been lost. Unemployment has fixed its clutches on as many as are likely to become jobless. "The worst is yet to come" seems a slogan no longer appropriate. Accordingly there prevails a sober and temperate confidence which may be without strong eco-

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nomic foundations but which does breed manly hope and courage. After all, one is beginning to hear it said, how fortunate the present generation is in comparison with some others of whom the past tells. Never before was there so charitable an awareness of the needs of others. The thought that neighbors might be starving has opened the most niggardly purses. Government is really "of the people," in the sense that it is vigilant to promote relief for distress. Even poor countries have, from this point of view, put forth a magnificent effort.

For the Church the balance-sheet of 1932 lists mingled joys and losses. Throughout the world there was noticeable a growing willingness to respond to the Holy Father's appeal for the reconstruction of the social order. If in the past religion sometimes appeared to be the ally of propertied classes, there is no doubt that at present Catholicism is officially committed to the poor, in so far as these are the victims of ethical disorder. Hand in hand with this has gone a notable deepening of popular spiritual life—a development which cannot be described quantitatively but which has been evident to observers in all countries. On the other hand, the political influence of the Church, in her rôle as co-guardian of human society, has lessened rather than increased. Mexico once more elected to despoil the Church of rights and possessions. The missions have suffered from political disturbances and loss of revenue. Throughout Europe a discernible decline of prestige is registered by Catholic observers. This is not surprising in view of the trend toward dictatorial extremes which has been part of history during the past three years.

To survey the events of the year is now the business of statisticians and other writers. We can attempt no ambitious outline, but there may be some value in a brief estimate of the most important happenings. As has been said, the human race was one in trial and misery. Accordingly nothing was more urgent than to attempt to use international machinery for the possible relief and cure of problems affecting all nations. During January, 1932, Dr. Bruening declared that Germany could no longer pay reparations. This assertion was no idle threat. Reports issued by international conferences reached the same conclusion. Thereby the whole troublesome question of war debts was again opened, though the Hoover moratorium and the elections in the United States kept the matter fairly out of the limelight until December. Then, after Washington's decision to stand pat, inflamed public opinion caused the French government to default temporarily. Some other countries likewise refused to pay, but Great Britain, Italy and Czechoslovakia advanced the sums required. The debate therewith ended in a draw, and the solution has been postponed until a later time.

Quite as serious was the inability of the League of Nations to carry on its work for peace. Owing in part to troubled economic conditions, nationalistic fervor increased in many places. Germany's insistence that the disarmament clauses in the Treaty of Versailles must be respected led eventually to the departure of the German delegation from Geneva, and the Conference was to all intents and purposes left dangling in the air. Subsequent efforts to soothe ruffled national temperaments have so far produced few tangible results. Meanwhile the League itself was left in a most precarious situation by the refusal of Japan to suspend its military and annexationist activities in China. The Lytton Report was everywhere acclaimed as a reasonable and forward-looking analysis of the Manchurian problem, but Tokyo would have none of it. Simultaneously the British were meeting with further trouble in India and Persia, while French policy in Indo-China was bitterly attacked even in Paris. Add wars and revolutions in Latin America to the disturbances chronicled above, and you have a picture which shows without commentary how difficult it necessarily has been for Mr. Hoover's government to carry on its effort in behalf of disarmament.

The year in the United States was dominated politically by the presidential election, which above all afforded the voter a chance to express his dissatisfaction with the trend of events. Doubtless Mr. Hoover was forced to shoulder the blame for many things which he did nothing whatever to bring about; and yet the failure of his party to muster an adequate corps of leaders would have sufficed, even in less parlous times, to earn the disfavor of the electorate. The commercial and economic situation of the country remained basically unchanged. While riotous deflation was halted by invoking the full financial strength of the government, unemployment continued and from some points of view grew even worse. For millions there existed no chance whatever of work, and the absence of insurance against want left the victims of disaster to fend as best they could with aid advanced by states, municipalities and private individuals. Fortunately numerous citizens responded to the call, while social and statistical agencies added much to the general knowledge of poverty and its effects.

As the year closed, the nation was still unaware of what plans to adopt in the hope of dealing with the manifold problems of the time. There appeared to be agreement that the liquor laws would be modified to permit the sale of beer and possibly wine, from the taxes payable on which the government might profit. Administrative economies were likewise promised. The President-elect had let it be known that the Domestic Allotment Plan had his approval as a remedy for agricultural distress. Shorter working hours and a lowering of interest rates on indebtedness were widely hailed as the most plausible and constructive measures offered to battle against industrial collapse and social distress. Yet there was also renewed talk of inflationary schemes. The final counsels of 1932 were, therefore, inconclusive. There is no doubt that 1933 will exact from the nation, and more generally from the world, some sort of communal resolution.

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THE MAN WHO SAVED DEMOCRACY

By WILLIAM C. MURPHY, JR.

"Behind the scenes" is so often a term covering reprehensible activities that it is a genuine pleasure to find an instance in which it stands for first-rate and public-spirited achievement. The work of Mr. John J. Raskob in behalf of the Democratic party has never been appreciated at its true worth. Immediately after the campaign, Mr. Charles Michelson declared that it was Mr. Raskob who had made the Democratic victory possible. Impressed by this statement, the Editor of THE COMMONWEAL *requested Mr. Murphy to interview Mr. Michelson and secure the facts upon which the present article is based.—The Editors.*

APPORTIONING the credit for winning a presidential election is somewhat like the task which engrosses those earnest souls who like to debate on who won the World War. Both undertakings have the characteristic that if an authoritative decision is ever reached, it will be long after all of the principal actors have passed from the stage of life. Nevertheless, the effort is interesting and possibly instructive.

There is one obvious answer to the question, "Who won the presidential election of 1932?" Franklin Delano Roosevelt won in the sense that he was elected President. But who made it possible for Mr. Roosevelt to be elected? Did he do it all himself? Did former Governor Alfred E. Smith do it? Did Mr. Hoover and the Republican party do it? Did the Democratic party do it?

Whatever credit must be given to the various factors listed, and conceding that millions of normal Republicans helped, it must be admitted that the Democratic party did most of it. But a party, like a corporation, is an abstraction; it lives and functions through men or women. Hence, if the Democratic party elected Mr. Roosevelt to the Presidency, as it undoubtedly and convincingly did, it operated through living human beings and to those men and women must go the credit for the party's achievement.

It must be obvious to anyone with even a superficial knowledge of American history since the Civil War that, normally, the Democratic party is not able to elect a President of the United States. From that time up to 1932 it has won only four national elections, electing Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson twice each. Some Democrats will argue that they also elected Tilden in 1876, and many historians believe that assertion is justified, but Mr. Tilden never became President.

Only four years ago, with one of the most popular candidates in all history, the Democratic party was so badly defeated that eminent writers were discussing with apparent seriousness what party would succeed to the rôle of opposition for the Republicans. To such expert interpreters of political trends and events it seemed impossible that the national Democracy could be resurrected as a serious contender for national supremacy. Yet in 1932 the Democratic candidates were swept into office by the most overwhelming majorities of popular and electoral votes ever recorded in comparable elections.

But long before, many months before Franklin Roosevelt and John N. Garner were nominated for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency, there were signs that the Democrats would be victorious in 1932. A tremendous Democratic sweep in the Congressional elections of 1930, and subsequent special elections to fill Congressional vacancies, demonstrated unmistakably what materialized in November, 1932—that the country was going Democratic with a vengeance. What—or who—was responsible for those preliminary victories which forecast the Roosevelt-Garner landslide?

Primarily and essentially the credit belongs to one man, a man whose name seems to have vanished from the headlines of political news stories, John J. Raskob, former Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Mr. Raskob had able assistants, to be sure. The assistants appeared more frequently in the public manifestations of political activity than did Mr. Raskob.

But he was the man who formed the organization through which the assistants functioned, his was the brain which conceived the grand strategy of the campaign in which they dictated the tactical maneuvers, his, almost exclusively, was the purse which provided the war fund. That he has been partially repaid for his expenditures and, probably, will receive additional repayments in the future is beside the question. If he had not made the advances, there would, in all probability, be no semblance of an organization today capable of repaying him or anyone else. And when he undertook to make the advances, it is doubtful if anyone save himself believed he could win out on the seemingly long-shot gamble he was making.

A few months after President Hoover was inaugurated in March, 1929, Mr. Raskob announced the establishment in Washington of the Democratic National Executive Committee. Jouett Shouse was made Chairman of the Executive Committee, and Charles Michelson, formerly Washington correspondent for the late New York *World*, became Director of Publicity. Elaborate offices were opened in Washington, with Mr. Raskob paying the bills for rent, salaries and other operating expenses.

From that time on, for three years, Mr. Raskob continued to pay the bills aggregating hundreds of thousands of dollars. And from that time on the Democratic party became something more than the label borne by defeated candidates for the Presidency

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every four years. That marked the rebirth of the Democracy which came of age in November, 1932.

This is not alone the view of many impartial bystanders, it is also the view held by those familiar with the innermost workings of the party machinery. For instance, Mr. Michelson describes it as follows: "Jouett Shouse is the man who won this election before the Chicago convention convened, and John J. Raskob is the man who made it possible for Mr. Shouse to win that victory."

As Mr. Michelson says, Mr. Raskob undertook the reorganization of the Democratic party at "a time when the average national chairman would have taken it for granted that his job was done, and would have been content to receive congratulations if his party had won or to drift into obscurity until he was supplanted or the next election came along."

It was at best a thankless task which Mr. Raskob undertook, a task which brought down upon him vituperation from Republican sources and a plenitude of carping criticism from members of his own party.

From the Republicans and their protagonists came the "Smear Hoover" canard, which represented Mr. Raskob as having hired Mr. Michelson and instructed the latter to publicize everything the latter's brain could devise to the discredit of the President. This was the reaction to the steady stream of publicity giving the Democratic viewpoint on the official acts of the Hoover administration which issued from Mr. Michelson's office. This was one element of the criticism which continued until Senator Pat Harrison observed that "the whispering campaign of 1928 is followed by the whimpering campaign of 1930."

From disgruntled Democratic sources came complaints because Mr. Raskob continued to voice his honest views in opposition to national prohibition. When he proposed his moderate "Home Rule" revision of the Eighteenth Amendment at a meeting of the Democratic National Committee in March, 1931, there was a chorus of protest from other prominent Democrats; many of whom labored mightily in support of the outright repeal platform at the Chicago convention and are now striving in Senate and House to translate that platform pledge into reality. As Al Smith said of himself from the platform at Chicago, "I was four years ahead of my party and look what happened to me."

As to the "Smear Hoover" accusation, there are several facts to be considered. Imitation is said to be the sincerest form of flattery, and about the time the Republicans began to complain about what Mr. Michelson's office was doing, they also set up a Washington publicity office of their own from which, to the best of their ability, they began the dissemination of material of similar character but intended to embarrass the Democrats.

Mr. Michelson says bluntly that he never had any instructions from Mr. Raskob as to the character of publicity material used.

"Mr. Raskob never interfered with the conduct of this office," is the way that Mr. Michelson puts it. "He put Mr. Shouse in charge of organization work and he put me in charge of publicity and then he let us alone."

When Mr. Raskob organized the Executive Committee and set up its headquarters in 1929, the great stock market boom was still in full swing. Perhaps there is justification for saying that the expenditures he then undertook were inconsequential to a man of his financial resources at that time.

But it was only a few months later when the crash came, and soon there developed a situation in which, no matter how extensive a man's holdings of securities and other property might be, it was still a matter of some consequence to hand out hundreds of thousands of dollars in cold cash.

As Mr. Michelson puts it: "Mr. Raskob was hit as hard as anyone in the market collapse but he never whimpered. He continued to advance the money to meet pay rolls and keep the organization alive."

Mr. Raskob is no longer Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. The Committee is dominated now by men who lost little time in deposing him after the Chicago convention. Mr. Michelson, however, is still Director of Publicity for the National Committee, and there can be no question of his sincerity when he describes Mr. Raskob as:

"The man who saved the Democratic party."

Threnody

That night I lay
Biting my pillow's edge,
Choking my heart,
Stifling its angry cries,
Saying again:
There is no room for such
A throb and beat
In such a world of lies.
For yet its throb
Racked all the tenant walls
Of my poor body,
But it would not still,
Nor could I bend its temper
To my will.

Heart, I betrayed you,
Taught you words of fear
That mind had learned by rote
And questioned not.
I starved you, beat you,
Mangled you until
I stand beside your corpse
And have not got
One ounce of gain
For such a murder done
But blood upon my hands
And on my brow,
And for your grave
A stone.

A. K. Parker.

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IN AN AGE OF TRANSITION

By RUSSELL WILBUR

REFLECTING on the subject of an age of transition from the standpoint of the Catholic Church, one confidently concludes that she is able to view an age of transition with great equanimity, owing to the fact that she is well aware that human nature always remains, through whatever transitions, fundamentally the same.

Human nature is plastic only within rather narrow limits.

Whatever the behaviorists and other closely allied psychological theorists and investigators may say—and in spite of their extravagant and scandalously one-sided theories the behaviorists are doing most useful work in helping to determine what is the extent and what are the limits of the plasticity of human nature—it is certain that human nature is, as I have said, plastic only within rather narrow limits.

And as a matter of fact it is, humanly speaking, upon human nature quite as much as upon historical facts of long ago that the whole theological scheme of sin and redemption, nature and grace, is founded. Whether one takes the early chapters of the Book of Genesis as historical narratives in the modern sense of that term, or whether one is willing for the sake of argument to take them as folk-lore or mythico-primitive history, it remains true that, as Saint Augustine says, "God has made us for Himself and our heart is restless until it rest in Him." The incurable restlessness of the human heart is an evidence that whether we ever did fall or not, at least we are fallen. We crave something—ineradicably we crave something—that human life on its surface, no matter how well organized and no matter how well cultivated we are to enjoy it, can never give.

Moreover, when we listen to impracticable idealists of the better and best types, such as Jane Addams or the late Prince Kropotkin, whether they be philosophical anarchists who think men can live without government, or pacifists who think men can live without war, or Communists who think men can live without private property, or nakedness enthusiasts who think men can live without clothes or shame, something in us thrills: what George Sand calls *"the sentiment of the ideal life* which is none other than man's normal life as we are called to know it."

In other words, we feel that what they say *ought to be true*, but we know that *it is not true* and never will be true on this earth.

The Garden of Eden exists somehow in the innermost depths of our hearts, but we are forever barred from access to it by the "flaming sword turning this way and that way," which we read of in the Book of Genesis as barring man from the Garden of Paradise. The flaming sword is no doubt the corruption of our nature as the catechism calls it; what Schopenhauer calls the unconscionable "will to live," Nietzsche the insatiable "will to power"; what old Jeremy Taylor calls "the wild indeterminate, infinite appetite of man"; what Scripture calls "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life"—in short, what Saint Augustine calls "the restlessness of the human heart."

It is not that any of the elements of our nature, animal or rational, are intrinsically corrupt, but that somehow, being made for an eternal end (a mystical end), we are incurably restless and consequently incontinent in our use of the creatures of time and sense and reason.

I have dwelt for just a minute or two on this doctrine of the fall of man to give an illustration of what I mean when I say that traditional Christianity is too securely founded on permanent facts of human nature to be much affected by transitional currents of biological or historical thought. Everything which the earliest chapters of Genesis relate—the Garden of Eden, the Tree of Life, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the Serpent and, above all, the Angel with the Flaming Sword—exists somehow, so to speak and as it were, in the depths of every human heart. Forever while earthly life lasts will the Angel with the Flaming Sword of exorbitant and insatiably restless human desire bar mankind from access to that earthly paradise of liberty, equality, fraternity, innocent sexuality and immortal health (Christian Science!) for which *the sentiment of the ideal life* deep within us tells us that we are somehow made.

To repeat, one has dwelt on this doctrine of the fall of man simply to illustrate what one means when one says that traditional Christianity is too securely founded on permanent facts of human nature to be much affected by transitional currents of biological or historical thought or by contemporary theories concerning the literary-historical character of the Sacred Scriptures.

A similar illustration might be made of all the more central and fundamental mysteries of the Faith, showing how each mystery answers to some permanent complication of human nature as a key to a lock—sometimes a very intricate key made to control an equally intricate lock.

The Catholic Church, then, has little to fear from modern science or from modern historical criticism.

What does fill her with alarm and challenge all her faith are the changes being wrought by the modern machine process industry and the consequent swollen urban civilization with its menace to family life, to motherhood and to the spiritual personality of the now excessively standardized masses of men.

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Humanly speaking, unless later developments of the machine process industry, such as the development of giant power plants, the wide and cheap distribution of power, etc., make possible a decentralization of industry and a de-urbanization of our people; unless the experiments with aluminum alloys, etc., are so successful as to make possible such a light and cheap kind of machinery as will permit the decentralization of industry even to the point of rehabilitating household industry to a considerable extent, so that we can get our women married early and back in the home, it is difficult to say what are the prospects of there being any such sexual and family life as Christianity can countenance.

We may scold about Karl Marx and scold at him as we please, *there is a great deal of truth in the so-called materialistic conception of history.*

The material substructure of life drastically and all-pervadingly conditions and, within limits, determines its spiritual superstructure. (Perhaps this is only what a Thomistic-Aristotelian philosopher might expect in view of his tenet that *materia signata quantitate sub certis dimensionibus* is the principle of individuation of all bodies—individual bodies, says Saint Thomas; social bodies, say we, continuing and applying his thought.)

The material substructure of any society, the factors of climate, soil, topography, race (biological), tools and methods of production (technological), drastically and all-pervadingly conditions and, within limits, determines its spiritual superstructure, its religion, ethics, philosophy, science, law, its political, social and family organization.

To speak as a mathematician, the material substructure of any life, individual or social, is the relatively independent variable; the spiritual superstructure is the relatively dependent variable. No doubt man's wide ranging intellectual conceptions (potentially universal as they are) and consequent free will have power to react upon and to reshape the material substructure of his life; but only within certain rather narrow limits. This would not have been a strange thought to Saint Thomas, who knew very well and said explicitly that virtue and vice (he means the "acquired" virtues and vices, not the "infused" virtues which accompany the theological virtue of charity when it is born by divine grace in the soul) are largely a matter of the physical make-up—of what Saint Thomas conceived of as the balance of the "humors" of the body; what we conceive of as a matter of the ductless glands, of the endocrine balance (!); or, if we are behaviorists, as the result of the reflexes conditioned chiefly in infancy and early childhood when we are entirely or largely plastic matter in the hands of our parents, nurses, teachers and companions. Probably the Pharisee who went into the Temple to pray and went down to his house unjustified had as a whole a much better endocrine balance, or much more happily conditioned reflexes, than the poor Publican who was mystically moved to cry out, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner," and went down to his house justified but probably for a good long time afterward, to all ordinary human apprehensions, rather more of a mess morally than the Pharisee.

Free-ranging human rational appetite may long to decentralize and de-urbanize modern industry and modern social life; to get our people back on the land and our women early married and into homes of their own. *But mankind will never voluntarily scrap the machine process industry.* Everything depends then on the development of giant power plants, the wide and cheap distribution of power, etc. Everything depends upon the experiments with aluminum alloys and such like other experiments as will make possible such light and cheap machinery as can be used in small rural factories or even in individual households. Cheap and speedy transportation, too, of such machinery and of its products would be required, particularly as one has in mind such an extensive decentralization of industry as would involve the manufacture of "parts" in small rural factories and even household workshops and their subsequently being "assembled" at some central point. Let human ingenuity and free will get to work on this problem.

This is a job in the first instance for Catholic technocrats or at least for technocrats who have some comprehension of and reverence for the traditional institutions and conventions of civilized man; who have likewise a comprehension of the limits of the psychological and ethical plasticity of human nature—a job for Catholic-minded or at least, in Mr. Irving Babbitt's sense, *humanist* technocrats. We may be sure that Mr. Howard Scott and the technocratic group working at Columbia University have nothing so little on their minds as the rehabilitation of country life.

However, from the Catholic point of view, the only practicable thing to do, I believe, is to move the larger part of the population back onto the land through the rehabilitation of household industry combined with small-scale farming. The whole combination will have to be facilitated and indeed made concretely possible by developing to the uttermost the possibilities of the modern machine process for producing light, portable, cheap machinery, as simple and yet as comprehensive in its productive capacity as may be.

Perhaps we may come back not by a circular historical movement, so to speak, but by the spiral, as it were, of developed machine technology to the situation which existed on the farm of the writer's Great-Grandfather White in Columbia County, New York, where the family and its dependents produced everything that they consumed except tea, coffee, calico, a few spices, etc.

What do you say Mr. Chesterton and Mr. Belloc? *Ducunt fata volentes, nolentes trahunt!* The fates (the divine decrees!) lead those who are willing and who understand; they drag along, roughly and violently as you please, those who are stupid and obstinately attached to things as they are—or, as they were.

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THE LANDSLIDE TO UNEMPLOYMENT

By MARGARET WILLIAMSEN

THE AMERICAN wage earner of pre-crash days had his prosperity continually dinned into him by politicians and press. He may have had his doubts about his affluence when trying to pay the butcher, baker and landlord out of the monthly pay-check and still salvage enough to buy a pair of shoes. He may have doubted further his prosperity when he was laid off during the middle of winter for an indefinite period and, in company with thousands of other unemployed men, tramped from employment bureau to factory and back again seeking work. Nevertheless, he was constantly told he was prosperous.

By 1932, reduced to the exigency of selling pencils or accepting charity, his scepticism about his past prosperity has faded. He is quite willing to believe that 1928 and 1929 were indeed glamorous days of peace and plenty. Comparatively speaking, of course, they were. Actually, however, the difficulties of obtaining jobs at living wages or any wages whatsoever, since the stock market crash of 1929, are only an extreme acceleration of the process which already was defined strongly in the days of prosperity.

In the following table, compiled from statistics gathered by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the relation between the cost of living, employment and wages reveals some startling facts. (Note: 1926 equals 100. Employment and pay-roll statistics, as gathered by the Bureau, set 1926 arbitrarily at 100. Cost of living statistics from the same source arbitrarily set 1913 at 100. In order to make figures comparable, cost of living index has been refigured with 1926 set at 100. Employment and pay-roll indices are for manufacturing industries surveyed by the Bureau and are the most complete statistics available for any branch of industry over a period of time.)

Year	*Cost of Living*	*Employment*	*Pay Roll*
1923	97.6 (plus)	108.8	104.3
1924	97.5	98.2	94.6
1925	100.4	99.2	97.7
1926	100.0	100.0	100.0
1927	98.7	96.4	96.5
1928	97.5	93.8	94.5
1929	97.6	97.5	100.4
1930	83.0	83.7	80.3

In order to confine the discussion to the purposes of this paper, namely, the increasing severity and causes of unemployment during the so-called prosperity years, the abnormal years of the decade, that is, 1921, 1922 and 1930, all years of business depression, will not be considered. This leaves the years 1923 to 1929, inclusive, for comment.

A cursory glance at the table reveals 1923 as the bright year of the decade. Living costs were about 1/10 percent higher than the lowest points reached in 1924 and in 1928. Employment and wages, however, soared far above any other year during the period. From the end of 1923 to the end of 1929, the trend in living costs, employment and wages was down. This is making allowance, of course, for the usual temporary fluctuations, which mark all economic movements. The period closes, however, with the wage earner on a decidedly lower and uncertain living standard.

To analyze more closely: In 1928, when prosperity may be said to have reached the semi-finals, the cost of living was approximately 99.9 percent the cost of living in 1923, employment was 86.2 percent the 1923 volume and wages were 90.6 percent as great as in 1923. In this connection, it is interesting to note that for the wage earner the year 1928 was by far the most severe of the seven prosperity years. Living costs, it is true, were at the lowest point, but so also were employment and wages, and the latter two had fallen far more abruptly than the former.

On the home stretch in 1929, prosperity, comparatively speaking, touched for a brief second the wage earner. Living costs were practically on the 1923 level, and both employment and wages rose but neither approached the 1923 levels. Wages were 96.2 percent as high as in 1923. This was the second best showing made during the seven-year period. The volume of employment was 89.6 percent of the 1923 total, giving 1929 fifth place in the employment category for the seven-year period.

The conclusion is written in these statistics that the economic status of the wage earner is becoming progressively lower. Employment has been falling off at a tremendous rate, wages have been falling, but not quite so rapidly, and the cost of living has fluctuated but slightly.

It may be argued that the employment and pay-roll statistics are not representative of the entire industrial and business life of the United States. It is true that they are confined to manufacturing industries, covering about 45 percent of the persons normally employed, and do not touch upon the vast numbers of persons who held white-collar positions during the boom. These statistics are the best criteria available, however, because they are representative of the entire United States, because they review a longer period of years than statistics for any other type of business and, finally, because the manufacturing industry is the base of and influences all other industries. What is true of the manufacturing industry is true sooner or later, in varying degrees, of other industries.

The causes of unemployment are to a great extent obvious but are not substantiated in any measure by statistics. In recent years numerous unemployment

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surveys have been made, but all of them have the fatal weakness of either covering too little ground to be truly representative or not covering from year to year the same territory in order to make comparison possible. All these reports, however, do have a common denominator—technological unemployment or some form of unemployment directly related. Without venturing into rash generalizations, it is quite probable that more detailed and uniform reports would substantiate beyond question the seriousness of this form of unemployment. Certainly observation seems to confirm the fact.

The report of the committee of the President's Conference on Unemployment, published in 1929, is the most hopeful of all recent reports but, incidentally, least verified by facts. It stated that between 1922 and 1925 there was per capita a 35 percent increase in productivity in manufacturing and then, ignoring the increase in unemployment, complacently assumed that the displaced workers, after a period of unemployment, were "absorbed into the newly expanded service industries which both create and serve leisure." The statement is true in a limited way, but there are many snags in it.

The phrase, "after a period of unemployment," sounds quite innocuous on paper. It is far from that in reality. The man who must support a family on the ordinary factory wage finds himself in a serious predicament when out of work even for a short time, and when the period of unemployment lengthens into months, as it frequently does, he often is compelled to seek charity.

After making a survey in three industrial centers of 754 workers who were discharged for reasons other than incompetence or insubordination, Isadore Lubin came to the conclusion that, while newer industries are absorbing displaced workers, the process is slow. Workers are out for an average of three months and when reëmployed frequently have to accept lower wages.

Robert J. Myers, studying the plight of 370 cutters in the men's clothing industry who were discharged because of technological changes, came to essentially the same conclusion as Mr. Lubin. One year and a half after discharge, 11.4 percent were not employed at all, and 12.95 had lost more than a year in finding employment, and only 28.7 percent of the discharged men had been able to find work almost immediately. The fact that many of these men worked at one to six trades before obtaining permanent employment is in itself an interesting commentary on the problem of earning a living.

There are some observers who believe that chronic unemployment is upon the country unless preventive steps are taken immediately. In this number is Stuart Chase. In "Men and Machines" he states that factory population between 1923 and 1928 permanently declined by 1,250,000. Delving further, he claims that productive workers in the United States, which include those in agriculture, manufacturing and mechanics, railroads and mining, declined by 1,675,000 between 1919 and 1925. Until 1920 new industries successfully absorbed workers displaced by technological improvements, but since that time there has been decidedly less blotting up.

In his paper, "Technical Changes in Manufacturing," L. P. Alford corroborates in general Mr. Chase's statements and conclusions. He reports that between the years 1899 and 1919 the number of workers increased 103 percent, but from 1919 to 1927 the number of workers decreased 2.9 percent. In the former period the productivity of each worker increased 4.7 percent, while in the latter it increased 53.5 percent.

These reports, it will be observed, vary widely in figures and percentages. As stated before, employment statistics are non-existent in the United States for the whole of industry, and statisticians must therefore base their conclusions on such limited surveys as are available. The reason for the differences in final figures and percentages is readily seen, but despite their varied bases, are strikingly similar in their conclusion, namely that prolonged and permanent unemployment is on the increase.

Without resorting to figures, and relying on observation, it is possible to concur in these conclusions. The talkies which ousted musicians from the theater, the dial telephone system which displaced thousands of operators, the numerous typewriting and adding machine inventions which are reducing the ranks of office workers, are common examples of the process which is eliminating the white-collar worker as well as the factory hand. The oft-reiterated statement, and figures to prove it, that displaced workers invariably are absorbed in other fields of endeavor is obviously false. There was, undoubtedly, an increase in the number of insurance agents and bond salesmen during the boom period. Not all of them, however, made a living then, and few are making a living today. There was a limit to the number of bonds and the amount of insurance which the public could buy even in the pre-crash day.

Another phase of the modern unemployment problem is the tendency to mergers and consolidations. This is usually classed separately from technological unemployment yet it is in reality another phase of the same problem. Large-scale industry is necessary for the profitable use of modern factory machinery. Modern industrial efficiency, which demands the cream of man and woman power, discarding it at forty years of age as worn out, makes large-scale industry practical. The difficulty which men of forty years or more find in obtaining employment is not exaggerated. The full import of the situation generally is not recognized. Men and women over forty years of age cannot be employed profitably in industry because their physical and nervous strength has been sapped by previous years in work.

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Estimates on the number of consolidations in the United States during the past decade are, like other business statistics, negligible, and not very comprehensive. The United States census figures on the growth in size of industrial establishments are not particularly helpful because of the frequency with which the census laws are changed. A record of mining mergers in the United States, as reported by the press, was made by Willard S. Thorp from 1919 to 1928 inclusive, on the theory that practically all important mergers are recorded in some publication. Mr. Thorp's search revealed 1,268 mergers, the greatest number of any one year, 221 occurring during 1928. During the same period, according to Mr. Thorp's statistics, 5,991 firms disappeared, through being acquired by other firms, and again the high record in the classification was reached in 1928 when 1,038 firms disappeared.

The above figures do not, of course, touch on the public utility field where the tendency to consolidation is great, nor on banks, hotels and retail organizations where the tendency is also very marked.

Again, observation is an excellent guide to conditions. More vividly than figures it confirms the fact that chain retailing and distribution and large-scale manufacturing gain an advantage every year. It is true that during depression years the number of mergers and consolidations drop, but it is equally true that mergers and consolidations consummated in boom years rarely are unmade during depression years. When business comes out of the doldrums, mergers and consolidations may be expected to resume activity where they left off.

Technological improvements and the movement toward consolidations and mergers account for the greater part of the growing body of unemployed. There are, however, other factors, which may effect more severely in time the face of the unemployment problem.

Since the war women have entered industry in increasing numbers, and he is a brave man who dares to contend that they are not capable workers or that they should not be allowed to become wage earners. They are quite generally conceded both points. Whatever women give as their reason or think is their reason for entering industry, indications are that it is becoming increasingly necessary for them to work, whether married or single.

The National Industrial Conference Board, after wide-spread investigation in 1927 concluded that $30.00 a week for fifty-two weeks in the year would support a family of two adults and two children but leave no margin for savings or extras. During the same period the Board made investigations of wage scales in twenty-five industrial centers in the United States and found that unskilled laborers were receiving an average wage of $24.13 a week and semi-skilled laborers were receiving an average wage of $31.09. Conditions such as these, undoubtedly, account for the fact that approximately 25 percent of all women workers are married women. They, undoubtedly, account also for the thousands of children who are put to work in fields and canning factories, who enter domestic service and who, in certain states, are not prevented very strenuously from entering manufacturing plants.

Notoriously low wages, of course, are paid women and children. The reasons are varied but not essential to this paper. Final results are another matter. Employers who can obtain the services of women for a fraction of what they have to pay men, naturally hire the women or reduce the wages paid to the men, and usually follow both courses of action. As a result, more and more married women as well as unmarried girls must seek employment because the men in the family do not earn enough.

Minnesota sought to protect the woman worker by passing a $12.00 a week minimum wage law but the law is broken daily, sometimes by legal trickery but more often brazenly and without fear of legal consequences. Other states do not tamper with wage scales, allowing the low scale to prevail. In a survey made in 1928, in Texas by the Texas Bureau of Labor Statistics, it was found that 52 percent of 11,425 women, whose earnings were reported, made less than $15.00 per week, and this despite the fact that the same survey disclosed the fact that $15.00 was the minimum for the absolute necessities of room, board, clothing, laundry, car fare and incidentals. The University of Michigan study made in 1927 on the earnings of business and professional women reported that the median yearly wage was $1,548 ($129 per month) and the median experience was 13.7 years. This group, be it noted, included women whose professions ranged from stenographers to doctors, lawyers, writers and other professions which commonly demand a university education.

There is still another source of chronic unemployment, as yet more potential than actual. It is the declining birth rate. How serious the problem threatens to become, certain sociologists have warned us. A practical illustration of the possible havoc in store because of the declining birth rate occurred this year in Minneapolis where the school board failed to renew the teaching contracts of twenty-five teachers because of the decreased enrollment in the kindergartens and primary grades. A similar predicament developed in Chicago a few years ago where the school board was faced with the problem of an excess number of seats in primary schools and a shortage of seats in secondary schools.

The social destruction which chronic unemployment is certain to cause already has taken root. How much deeper these roots will go before corrective steps are taken cannot be said. The most hopeful sign is the rising interest in the problem but whether this interest will continue after the present depression recedes and the usual, short post-depression boom sets in is questionable. Public interest, if it runs true to form, will fade with its first three daily meals.

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ATMOSPHERE IN POETRY

By THEODORE MAYNARD

OF ALL literatures that of England is most thoroughly suffused with glamor. I am far from saying that other literatures are devoid of it, but its comparative lack is what the Englishman notices in French poetry. Therefore, until he comes to know French very well indeed, he finds its poetry cold and empty. After that he discovers glories that compensate for what he is accustomed to luxuriate in in the company of his own poets.

Nor am I going to say that Greek and Latin poetry lacks atmosphere. But the skies under which it was written were clear, and it sought to achieve the crystalline in its art, where all things are seen in perfect proportion. Yet, though we must all go to school to the classical, which will always remain a salutary corrective to our tendency to excess, we cannot be quite satisfied with it, for we reach out to mystery.

To some extent this may be due to our saturation with the tremendous and cloudy imagery of the Bible. I should say rather that that imagery makes so powerful an appeal to us because it corroborates something we had long before we had the Bible. I am inclined to trace it to the same source that Matthew Arnold discovered for it—the Celtic elements in the national character. Mystery, glamor, enchantment, charm—without these our poetry would be nothing.

As a convenient symbol for English poetry we might take moonlight, as for Irish poetry we might take twilight. Of course the English poets are not always writing about the moon; but in how much of it the moon is suggested if not actually present. Our poets are all lunatics.

Take this from Chaucer's "Troilus and Criseyde":

> A nightingale upon a cedre grene
> Under the chambre wal ther-as she lay
> Ful loude songe ayein the mone shene;

and this from Shakespeare:

> We'll wear out
> In a walled prison, packs and sects of great ones
> That ebb and flow by the moon;

and this from Coleridge:

> But oh, that dark romantic chasm which slanted
> Down a green hill, athwart a cedarn cover,
> A savage place, as holy and enchanted
> As ere beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

We get a suggestion of it even in places where it is not mentioned, as in Poe's "Ulalume":

> The skies they were ashen and sober;
> The leaves they were crispèd and sere—
> The leaves they were withering and sere;
> It was night in the lonesome October
> Of my most immemorial year;
> It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
> In the misty mid-region of Weir—
> It was down by the dark tarn of Auber,
> In the ghoul-haunted woodlands of Weir.

But I think I can hear somebody saying, "What kind of an argument is this to insist that the moon is there even when the poet specifically tells us that the night was misty and dark?" Well, the moon is there all the same, or the thing the moon symbolizes—the romantic atmosphere. And later in his poem Poe does mention the moon:

> At the end of our path a liquescent
> And nebulous luster was born,
> Out of which a miraculous crescent
> Arose with a duplicate horn—
> Astarte's bediamonded crescent
> Distinct with its duplicate horn.

There are so many lines too in which the moon is not mentioned, but which give us nevertheless a picture which demands the moon.

> The same that ofttimes hath
> Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Note that there is no word of description there; yet anybody with any imagination can see what Keats saw: a great castle of crumbling stone, set on the very edge of a precipice. What trees there are are cedars, twisted into all kinds of fantastic shapes by the winds. Far below the sea churns over the rocks, and we look out over a vast expanse: "The foam of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn." Am I making a mere logical deduction, that to see one must have light? Not at all. For all that Keats definitely tells us it might be noonday. Only somehow we know it is the romantic night, and that the moon is in the skies.

If the main business of prose is precise statement, the main business of poetry (for us at any rate) is to hint at thrilling secrets. This can best be done through the creation of the suitable atmosphere. When we are tingling with a sense of awe and wonder, then, and only then, are we in the right receptive mood. Precise statement would destroy the illusion, which is more than an illusion because through it we find the mystery for which we hunger.

In this matter, as in all matters, there is a true way and a false way of trying to create atmosphere. In the once famous passage in Moore's "Lalla Rookh" on the Vale of Cashmere, we see a poet deliberately tak-

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ing all the ingredients of magic, and stirring them together, in the prescribed proportions. But it is all wrong, for it is nothing but a conjuring trick, and we know very well that Moore has rabbits in his hat, even if we can admire the dexterity with which he takes them out. It is not moonlight that he gives us but moonshine.

Walter De la Mare never was in Arabia, any more than Moore was ever in Cashmere. The Arabia of his poem does not exist, but he has lived in the Arabia of his imagination; just as Mangan when he wrote his "Siberia" felt the winds and saw the snows of that enormous desolate country. De la Mare, in other words, uses Arabia as a symbol of mysterious beauty, which he has passionately felt. Moore felt nothing except a discreet voluptuousness, and wrote with his tongue in his cheek. This is how the thing should be done:

Sweet is the music of Arabia,
In my heart, when out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gliding streams;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired musicians
In the brooding silence of night.

That is not the geographical Arabia; yet it is a true one—true to "The Arabian Nights," and so an embodiment of beauty.

Now to take something quite different, from John Masefield's "Reynard the Fox." This magnificent breathless poem, describing with superb realism a fox-hunt, is of actual England, or at any rate of the England of which poets dream. There is no fantasy here. We are on horseback, galloping, and the last thing we want to do at the moment is to throw our heads back, close our eyes and swoon with the weight of our wonder. But enchantment is here all the same, and enchantment which derives from the mere remembrance of such an English countryside.

The fox swerved left and scrambled out,
Knocking crinked green shells from the brussels-sprout,
He scrambled out through the cobbler's paling,
And up Pill's orchard to Purton's Tailing,
Across the plow at the top of bent,
Through the heaped manure to kill his scent,
Over to Aldam's, up to Cappell's,
Past Nursery Lot with its whitewashed apples,
Past Colston's Broom, past Gaunt's, past Shere's,
Past Foxwhelps' Oasts with their hooded ears,
Past Monk's Ash Clerewell, past Beggars' Oak,
Past the great elms blue with the Hinton smoke.
Along past Hinton to Hinton Green,
Where the wind-washed steeple stood serene
With its golden bird still sailing air.
Past Banner Barton, past Chipping Bare,
Past Madding's Hollow, down Dundry Dip,
And up Goose Grass to the Sailing Ship.

There is no time here in the midst of pursuit to pause for descriptions: as we rush past, we catch sight of an apple-orchard, a manure-heap, a clump of elms, and a steeple—England glimpsed as the horse leaps a hedge. Even here, though, is mystery, charm, enchantment. The mere tang of the names is so English that it creates England for us. Mr. Masefield made them up for the occasion; but the English counties are so full of names just like them, that the cataloguing of them suffices. What they suggest is all that rural England means to us.

Mr. Masefield's lyric mood is nearly always one of wistful melancholy, which is present also, by way of accompaniment, to his most lurid tales in verse. It should be noted, also, how greatly he has been concerned with the sea, which nearly as well as the moon might serve as the symbol of the glamor of English poetry. This is in his famous "Sea-Fever," and in the heart-broken yearning for one knows not what of his "Tewkesbury Road." I sometimes feel a little uncomfortable when I encounter Mr. Masefield in such a mood; for I have the feeling that he is going to burst out crying upon my shoulder. But there can be no question that, whatever incidental critical objections one might raise to this excessive *Sehnsuch*, he does what the English poet should do—flood the world with glamor.

I must not be misunderstood as making this note the all-important thing in English poetry, though I do think one could hardly overestimate its importance. It will not, admittedly, apply to every poem, or to every poet; but it certainly is a key to our literature. For a hundred years Englishmen tried to live in a clear, dry light, and to admit only the value of common sense. And what happened? A great deal of what we might call Voodoo-worship went on surreptitiously. The eighteenth century, having forbidden mystery and enthusiasm, indulged itself on the sly with the cult of the rococo and the "Gothic." It was the age of those fantastic romances, "The Monk" and "The Mysteries of Udolpho." So that at last when Romanticism, which had been officially banned for so long a time, got its chance, it came like a roaring tide sweeping everything before it.

The Elizabethans had given full rein to their love of fantastic glamor, and not only in "A Midsummer-night's Dream" are all the characters bewitched.

Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the sea-maid's music.

But before long the Puritan blight settled upon merry England. And Richard Corbet cried, "Farewell, rewards and fairies"—

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Witness those rings and roundelays
Of theirs, which yet remain,
Were footed in Queen Mary's days
On many a grassy plain;
But since of late, Elizabeth,
And later, James came in,
They never danced on any heath
As when the time hath been.

They never quite disappeared, however, though for a long time they were disapproved of by all respectable people and the powerfully placed: Merry England did not die. But it received an almost mortal wound. In the struggle for the soul of England, the defenders of the old tradition happened, in the main, to be men of a bright, brittle, trifling wit; and the weight of serious passion was on the side of the new rulers of the kingdom. Of these we must take their man of highest genius as the best illustration of the changed mood of the time.

Milton showed in his youth, while writing "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," that Merry England had charmed him; and there are many expressions in those poems which I think he must have regretted in later life. It was not the Puritan of "Paradise Lost" —the man who went out of his way to inform us that Adam and Eve in Eden used no prayer-books in their devotions, or any musical instruments to accompany their hymns—who while at Cambridge had fallen under the spell of a religious spirit very different from that which he showed in his epic.

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy-proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing anthem blow,
To the full-voiced choir below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

By the time he sat down as a blind and embittered old man to the writing of "Paradise Lost," he had come to repudiate all such things. In that wonderful poem there is hardly any mystery, hardly any awe. Milton looks unflinching and unabashed at glory. As a thinker he has no subtlety, as a Christian no spirituality, as a poet nothing but the majestically concrete. His austere Puritanism finds expression in a style austerely classical. Though he did not know it, he exemplified the triumph of the pagan gods.

This is not said in disparagement. Rather it is said in wonder that a man who had put himself under such a handicap should have achieved what he did—the greatest poem in our language, though it is also the poem most empty of the glamorous mystery which elsewhere is the soul of our poetry.

PLOW VERSUS SWORD

By STANLEY B. JAMES

AMONG the literary centenaries of 1932 none deserves better to be remembered than that of William Langland, author of "The Vision of Piers Plowman." The fact that it is 600 years since he opened his eyes on the Malvern Hills does but make more striking the peculiar relevancy for our own generation of what he had to say. His great contemporary, Chaucer, lives by reason of the universal appeal made by his genial humanity. Langland is of a different type. His work is marked by a strain of Hebraic seriousness and it is by the catholicity of his social teaching that he best deserves to be remembered.

In Piers Plowman he gives us, by one of those bold anachronisms of which the middle ages were fond, a picture of Jesus Christ as a Mediaeval Husbandman.

" 'Is Piers then in this place?' said I, and Faith stared upon me.
'This Jesus of His nobility for love hath undertaken,
Not to be known as Perfect God but in Piers Plowman's arms to joust,
His helmet and his breast-plate—the nature of mankind.' "

Habited in flesh and blood, Our Lord attires Himself in the garb of a fourteenth-century peasant.

There was nothing very strange in that to the imagination of the time, accustomed to see the shepherds of Bethlehem represented in the mystery plays looking and speaking like pastoral folk of the period. Langland did but carry the anachronism a step further when he made Christ a contemporary plowman. The laborer walking behind his team with his plow-foot in the furrow was not only a familiar spectacle to that generation; plowing itself was a familiar experience of which most men had some knowledge. It was the customary work of the archers and men-at-arms who fought at Crécy and Poitiers. For that was the time when England was overwhelmingly agricultural in character and when even craftsmen, in addition to their craft, tilled their acres, and lords were all land-lords. Plowing was the most universal form of labor the poet could have selected. In such a one as Piers his generation would perceive Everyman. That the Son of Man should be presented in this form was for them therefore most fitting. But we may go further than that.

Were not our eyes jaundiced by the effects of our industrial and commercial civilization, we should see in this Figure one who symbolizes for every age the essential labor of men. The mechanic in blue jeans is a modern type and, maybe, a passing phase. The plowman, on the contrary, stands up boldly against the sky-line of the centuries, an unchanging figure, his toil concerned with the production of primary necessities. However high may rise the towers of culture, however broad may be the character of a civilization, it is on that basis they rest. Factory smoke may obscure the hillside on which the agriculturalist follows his plow, but, when it clears, as clear it will, he will be found still engaged in his humble occupation, sustaining thereby the whole weight of the world. In choosing this type to represent Him Who belongs to all ages, Langland was bending to no temporary fashion, adopting no mere provincial symbol, but setting before us one whose characteristic labors are of unvarying value. He who makes the soil bring forth bread is, on the natural plane, of the same universality as he who, on the supernatural plane, consecrates that bread and so

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changes it into the Flesh and Blood of Incarnate God. Priest and peasant may be well linked together as serving, each in his sphere, man's everlasting needs.

It was the familiarity of the type of labor which he selected which recommended Langland's inspired choice to his own generation, but it is the fact that the plowman has lost, in our eyes, his ancient primacy which gives Piers his present-day instructiveness. The poet's parable reminds us of that of which it is essential we should take note. Our unstable society will never regain its balance until it rests once more on an agricultural foundation. Morally, psychologically as well as economically, the husbandman conserves those values which are the very life-blood of a healthy community. He stands for that stabilizing element of which we are most in need. In his steady and patient toil is the corrective for the fever of speculation. Since farming is not so much a business as a mode of life which is its own reward, it tends to hold commercialism in check. Living, as he does, in close contact with nature, the agriculturalist serves to bring us back from the overheated artificiality of the city. The nature of his occupation and his normal surroundings of earth and sky give him a more universal outlook than is fostered by urbanism. These are some of the ways, but only some, in which his essential importance may be seen. It is our intention, however, to dwell here on a particular feature of Langland's conception. There is one aspect of his Plowman which had a very special application to his own times and which has a no less relevant meaning for us.

It will have been noticed in the quotation from the poem which has been given that Piers is spoken of as both a knight and a plowman. At first one is apt to regard this as a confusion of metaphors. Langland, it must be confessed, is often guilty of such ambiguities. In this case, however, I think that the seeming carelessness is intentional and that the apparent mistake hides one of the poet's profoundest lessons. In fact he is conveying the same truth as that taught by the prophet who foresaw the time when swords should be beaten into plowshares.

It must be remembered that Langland lived in a warlike age and under one of the great warrior-kings of the mediaeval period. The victories of Edward III and his son, the Black Prince, in France had set all Europe ringing with their fame. English arms had been no less successful against the Scots. Captured royalties had become a common sight in London processions. It looked as though considerable portions of both France and Scotland would be added to the realm. But for these triumphs the nation had to pay. At a time when the Black Death had already more than halved the working population, thousands were taken from productive labor to serve in the wars. In addition, heavy taxes were imposed, and it was one of these, the poll-tax, which precipitated the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. The actual gains, as a matter of fact, were small. For all the slaughter, the country was none the richer and the territorial acquisitions were almost nil. It is a strange fact that, living through such a time, the poet should have so little to say concerning the prowess shown in these campaigns. May we not suppose that one of his deep insight saw through the glamor of war and estimated at their right value the victories in which his countrymen were exulting? He therefore represents his "knight" as a plowman. It is his victories over the stubborn soil, he tells us in effect, which really matter. It is by productive labor on one's own land rather than by the destructive pillaging of one's neighbor's land that a nation's true wealth is built up. In the steady toil demanded by fields rather than by the excitement and blood-lust of battle is a people's character tested and strengthened. The total effect of the poem, in fact, is to turn attention from the fictitious glory of militarism to the unspectacular pursuits of peace. It had been the glory of the Church at an earlier period to turn the savagery of warriors into channels which were at least related to religion. The Crusades effected a great work in giving to the chivalry of Europe an object worthy of its heroism. But by Langland's day the enthusiasm animating those vast enterprises was spent. It was time that human energies were canalized in an undertaking of more creative and serviceable character. The poet's Plowman-Christ pointed the way.

Alas! the guidance thus offered was not followed. The age became more and more commercial. The peasant disappeared, driven off his acres by rapacious landlords who turned the arable lands into more profitable sheep-runs. Such traces of him as lingered succumbed to the enclosure acts of the eighteenth century and to the demands of those urban centers created by the Industrial Revolution. The advocates of this new type of civilization claimed that industry and commerce, between them, would abolish war. It was supposed that the manufacture and interchange of commodities would foster an anti-militaristic temper and encourage international amity on a basis of mutual profit. It was commonly thought that feudal institutions were responsible for militarism and that with a generation busy capturing markets from one another would come peace. We have had a rude awakening. Science, which was to usher in the age of universal brotherhood, we find as willing to lend its services to the inventor of explosives as to further the aims of the humanitarian, while commerce has offered a direct provocation to war. It is true that the belligerents of modern times no longer fight for dynastic reasons any more than they apparel themselves in coats of mail. War itself, however, has survived the change of motive and method. The merchant class has not proved, as a whole, as closely related as was hoped to the angelic heralds of "peace on earth, good-will among men."

That type on which Langland relied, if left free to follow his own patient vocation, offers far better prospects of discrediting the militaristic temper. The two indeed are at the opposite poles. The one stands for creation, the other for destruction. A peasant state arming itself for aggressive war is unthinkable. A farming community thinking more of burning its neighbor's crops than of reaping its own is incredible. We are speaking, of course, of the genuine agriculturalist, he who is content to cultivate a small holding and to forego high profits for the sake of a quiet and natural mode of life. The speculator investing in large estates and employing an army of mechanics for cultivating it and another army of clerks for selling his produce belongs to another category.

It is good news that the former type is growing in the United States. The returns of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics at Washington indicate that the tide of population is beginning to flow from the town to the country. From the "Yearbook of Agriculture" for 1931 we learn that the small farmer is holding his own, and this is especially cheering when we learn that one of the reasons for this is that "these men reckon the small farm as equivalent for living purposes to a farm of large size. This type of farmer thinks first of his family, its security, space for restless, growing children, without large expense or great responsibility to produce." The emphasis on the family is of special importance, for just as the husbandman thinks more of cultivating his own crops than of destroying his neighbor's harvest, so the father and mother, as such, will be more concerned with the rearing of their own children than of making targets of other people's children.

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But, it will be said, agriculture cannot take the place of war; it is dull and makes no appeal to that heroic spirit of which fighting is the expression. That depends on how you look at it. The pioneers who set out for the West in the last century were as hardy and as brave as any soldiery. Could but their spirit descend upon our generation, there would be no complaint that the plowman was an unadventurous being. When the poet transformed his knight into a tiller of the soil, he did not mean to dispense with the qualities which had made him formidable in the lists and on the battle-field. When the sword is turned into the plowshare, the temper of the steel remains; and when the soldier becomes an agriculturalist, there is no reason why he should lose that which made him a good soldier. To compel nature to do our will needs courage no less than does compelling our fellow man to do our bidding. To conquer the earth that men may live calls for as high a type of manhood as, through the deaths of many, to annex new territory. Especially must this be the case where he who seizes the plow-handle is inexperienced.

It may be that it is to just this adventure that the present generation is called. It may be that the crisis which has determined some already to go back to the land will deepen and that more and more of those familiar only with the sidewalk will hear the call of the soil. If then, like Piers, they should garb themselves in homespun and face their unaccustomed task with spirit and intelligence, grappling with the forces of nature as once they grappled with the competing forces of the city, a future generation may well regard them as heroes who pioneered the way to a better and a happier civilization and, in their own persons, beat the sword into the plowshare.

BEAUNE

By ERIN SAMSON

BEAUNE is like heaven: it cannot be and yet it is. There is the miracle of the third-class ticket, twelve francs paid at Dijon, and after a short hour—the middle ages and a perfection of atmosphere that will not be conquered by time or change.

Visitors may hurry from the hospice to the church with a clatter of urban heels, motor-cars becloud noisily the outskirts, but Beaune nurses its ancient peace. It is no more ruffled than the glass pond in a toy garden, which nursery storms and children playing Aeolus never disturb.

The name of the town is musical and the streets by their angles and curves suggest harmonies a hairbreadth out of reach. The silence increases this impression.

There are many treeless streets of clean, untufted cobblestones, which the houses bind with suavity; their fronts meet evenly with no unexpected sallies and yet the effect is not monotonous. One sees the pattern of the town plainly because of the bareness. It is reality simplified like the background of primitive paintings. Here is not the romantic mediaeval with dark towers and obscure vistas, but the precision and clarity of illuminated "Hours" and Scholastic hymns.

Beaune was complete at the end of the fifteenth century; what has been added has stepped back, without constraint, into the golden age of Burgundy. A mistiness of centuries envelops Bruges. There one feels that the splendor has outlived the purpose. Even immortal Rome needs masonry to support the crumbling arch; it is rather in her people, in her civic and ecclesiastic life that her agelessness resides. But little Beaune has not cracked beneath the patina. Its streets are empty, as those of every small French town, too thrifty to waste the day, too discreet to strut at night. Beaune will not join the dead, the museum pieces, until the sun ceases its miracle of alchemy within the native grape, or until the palate of the world, dulled and coarsened, loses its most aristocratic delight.

The hospital reminds us that the word is cousin to the longer hospitality. In a frame of surpassing beauty, the poor are nursed with the pomp ascribed to kings and a tenderness the kings may not always know.

On the street a bare wall reveals nothing, unless one looks up to the steep roofs of tile. The unobtrusive doorway is protected by an overhanging gable, as though the master of the house would shelter the guest from the very instant he reaches the threshold. There are two thresholds to cross, under a vaulting of blue and gilded stars. An old man swings open the oaken doors, which admit one into the courtyard and busy world so careless of admiration, so untroubled by its fame. A younger old-man, with a brisk eye and gracious air, conducts the visitors through the hospice. No one else seems aware of their presence.

Nicolas Rolin, chancellor of Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy, because of a great pity for his plague-stricken townsmen, began in 1443 the hospital where "the sick poor would be received, cared for and lodged," giving it "forever to God, the Virgin Mary and Saint Anthony." Many have endowed hospitals but none with greater perspicacity. The charter of the wealthy-wise Nicolas has withstood all manner of assault. The revenues "annual and perpetual" derive from vineyards more permanent, their roots in Burgundian soil, than the heavy ephemerality of gold. A town council rents out the vineyards, which are much sought after and remain for generations in the care of one family. No vintage is more venerable than Beaune's. Does not Master Villon sing,

"Je demande du vin de Beaulne,
Qui soit bon, et nul autrement"?

The nuns in charge of the hospice have the sempiternal character of the place. Revolutions and political malevolence have not affected them. They too are a part of the inexorable charter, which has preserved integrally for nearly five hundred years the founder's dream and its exact realization.

One wonders if the picture of the courtyard grew first in the mind of Nicolas or of his dear wife, Guigone de Salines, in whose honor he imprinted on the walls, *Seule* (My only love). Or was the vision the master builder's or the master stone-cutter's? I like to think that, although the architects created the long, low lines, the wooden balcony which crosses three sides, the steep varicolored roofs, the gay, gilded spires, it was Guigone who imagined the nuns' costume like a lady's of the period, snow white in summer, blue for cold, wintry days. I like to think that it was Guigone who saw that doves must flutter from the eaves, their pure white the harmonious accompaniment of the Sisters' linen scrolls, which hiding their hair, seem to illumine their clear faces.

Surely, too, it was she who had an eye to the delightful kitchen, spacious and inviting, at once ornamental and practical. I know Guigone's thought was here, for most conspicuously on the chimney are the Gothic letters, *Seule,* fond Nicolas's approving stamp.

The pharmacy is another room beautiful in its fitness for a purpose. The majolica jars, marked 1787, match the tiled floor. A spotless atmosphere prevails, without the unpleasant odors one associates with modern dispensaries. One imagines fascinating herbs smelling obscurely of old forests and deep-growing roots when the cover is lifted, but we are assured that the contents are of the twentieth century, in spite of ancient containers.

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The great hall was surely Rolin's favorite spot. The man's charter is such a noble idea that one must credit him with this noblest creation. The great hall is also the chapel and the poor men's ward. It is the chief splendor of Beaune, a chapel 300 feet long, magnificently vaulted with wooden arches supported by painted and gilt crosspieces, its huge floor of polished tiles, its proportions noble, the windows spaced to shed light in balanced splashes, but all this not an empty majesty awaiting its occasion.

From Gothic times to the Renaissance, through the glittering age of the Louis and the confusion of the revolt, through the empire and the restoration and the republics, the poor of Beaune and the surrounding country have been nursed here in literal obedience to the doctrine of Christ. They have been placed in the throne room to sleep and waken, to wrestle with bodily pain and sometimes to cease and leave the pain; they are next the throne in Beaune, if nowhere else, and the King is with them all the day and night, and so is the splendor with which man in his sweet childishness likes to surround the omnipotent. Clean narrow beds, clean white walls, and kind attention are to be found everywhere under the formula "Charity" or "Social Service," which like subdued music seems to justify life and prove the particle of goodness in man. But rising above it is the madly generous song of Beaune:

Give the poor and sick not only cleanliness and comfort and good care, give them loveliness, give them magnificence; give them everything—God himself! Make the hall high, the floors of precious tiles; gild the rafters. Let the beds be carven oak curtained with scarlet, the counterpanes of fine linen on which the ivory hands of old women will find cool memories. Even the water jugs will be pewter whose dull sheen is pleasant to look upon against the oak and red. The crucifix on the wall will be a work of art which could be sold with profit to a museum. A connoisseur would appreciate more fully its execution, but let the poor have it; they love its age, they revere its worth, they know best its suffering.

Place the pulpit in their midst so that Christ's words and His priest's counsel will sound reassuringly near. Pull the white curtains partly over the great windows so that the light will fall softly on polished surfaces and on weary eyes. Let the Sisters pass in and out, dressed like court ladies, humbly serving the lordly poor.

In the stalls at Mass, their headpieces rise in the gloom, like miniature ivory castles which might well be the houses of the elect, clustering in Paradise, and seen from a great distance.

The nuns sing, the acolyte swings his censor and gradually the incense reaches the last beds. The candles flicker, morning quivers through the stained glass of the eastern windows.

"Ite missa est." Here it is only half a dismissal: the nuns file out, the stray guest, but the sick remain at home.

Outside, in the courtyard, the activity of day begins. Nuns sweep the pavement, workmen mend a pipe, the kitchen sends forth nutritive aromas. Two internes wheel a patient to the operating room. The Sister pharmacist puts on her spectacles to read prescriptions. The doves circle above the roof, imitating the commotion. Soon tourists will stalk across the yard in boisterous insignificance. But it does not matter. Is there some spell in the charter of Nicolas Rolin that even the ruthless traveler cannot break? May he never harm the wonder of Beaune's hospice, which lies not only in a rare assemblage of stones, in the green and yellow roof, in the tapestried rooms and their white-turreted guardians, but in that shortest of love protests, *Seule*, and that generous deed whereby the sick and poor are declared royal and most especially sons of the one King.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE BABY RACKET

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: Is good copy so scarce that the editor has to use such one-sided, puerile articles as "The Baby Racket"? Or is the editor unconsciously promoting subtle birth control propaganda? More likely, it was necessary to place the doctors and hospitals in a bad light in order to make the Lewis Hospital appear wonderful.

"Feeling like a pair of imbeciles"—if the author visited hospitals in the capacity of a newspaper reporter and still was so helpless in obtaining obstetrical service at a reasonable price, she is flattering herself when she states that she felt like an imbecile. It is generally known amongst intelligent people, that one can obtain the private services of a competent obstetrician and a good hospital far below the prices which Katharine Darst quotes.

Katharine Darst appears to be the type of patient who would not have entertained the idea of doing without two nurses, in the best room in the most expensive hospital. Undoubtedly she would have been insulted by the mere suggestion of anything less pretentious. And of course she must have a "fashionable doctor."

One can determine readily from the article—long honeymoon, maid, theatre, taxicabs, liquor—that the Darst family was living to the limit of its income. According to her statement she "paid $950 just to be grand." Yet she did not intend that her first baby be "born de luxe." Oh, no!

Why does not Mrs. Darst complain of the cost of liquor instead of medical care? The inference is quite plain that all they needed to do to save $900 was to "cut down on taxicabs and theatres." "My husband went without liquor and I went without a maid." Don't you think the poor dears deserve heaven for such stupendous sacrifices?

Again the inference is clear that by discontinuing liquor and taxicabs and a "few little comforts" in 1932, they would be able to save the $900 necessary for their delivery "de luxe." Now if this is true, she should be ashamed to admit that she sought charity. And need one add, those who gave it were fools?

The title of the article should be "The Charity Racket."

Does Mrs. Darst realize that in good times the chief obstetrician at the Lewis Hospital received $200 a month for twenty-four hours a day, or about $200 a month less than her husband received as a movie operator for six hours a day? No? Well then, while the donors of this hospital get credit for this wonderful charity, let us not forget that it is being continued only by the exploitation of the doctors serving on the staff of the hospital.

As a final query, may one ask: Why doesn't the Lewis Hospital depend upon scientific achievement rather than clumsy newspaper articles for prestige?

JOSEPH L. MEYER, M.D.

San Francisco, Calif.

TO the Editor: THE COMMONWEAL professes to be a "review of literature, the arts, and public affairs." May a reader inquire under which category "The Baby Racket," by Katharine Darst, in the issue of December 14, 1932, is included? It can hardly be called literature until it has stood the test of time; we might concede that motherhood is an art, but scarcely when treated as a "racket"; and as for being a public affair—its purport would seem to be of a most private nature.

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Indeed, the article would not seem to justify its existence in even the most trivial of publications; but its appearance in THE COMMONWEAL has led this favorably disposed reader to conclude that there must have been some reason for printing it, however blind we may be to that reason.

If the writer's purpose was to praise the Lewis Memorial Maternity Hospital, it was a commendable one but hardly necessitated such an odious comparison to bring out its worth. If the article is intended to present a Catholic attitude on birth control, it might have been more direct. If the advantages of ward life were to be extolled, they might have been described with much more colorful effect.

But why dilate on the opportunities the lady lost? What we object to is the falseness and artificiality of the impression she gives. Oh yes, THE COMMONWEAL's announcement that it has "investigated her statements" is accepted faithfully. But the distinction lies in the fact that while Mrs. Darst's experience is true, it is the strangest of truth and decidedly not typical.

Did the typical Catholic American family in 1928 spend so much money on taxis, liquor and maids that it was able to save $1,000 for the arrival of each child? If so, we marvel at the luxury of that day and we heartily compliment such parents on the ascetic self-control and saintlike mortification which the bearing of children would seem to entail! Did the typical Catholic American home of 1928 have a maid to dismiss when baby was coming? What a hardship to dispense with one of the servants when she was even more necessary for her mistress' comfort! The artificiality of the family situation presented should be evident.

Nor is the professional situation any more typical. Of course, there are fashionable, faddish physicians, and always will be, ready to make a fabulous living at the expense of just such credulous, human-respecting people as the Darsts. But they are not representative of the majority of honest, hard-laboring, long-suffering, unpaid and much-abused members of the medical profession, among them the Catholic doctors who are to be found, Mrs. Darst, in any of the fine Catholic hospitals of the country. And perhaps a Catholic nurse might be available who is not given to recounting tales of abnormalities. At any rate, it has always been possible to obtain good hospital service in this city, as an example, for any amount between $50 and $100. And the best obstetricians available accept the same amount as does the hospital for their fee. This information is based on advice from the Catholic hospitals in this community.

In conclusion, the fall of the house of Darst was a mediocre fantasy whose moral is—we wonder what! Has THE COMMONWEAL "gone Hollywood" or is it racketeering?

ANTOINETTE MUSANTE.

Saint Louis, Mo.

TO the Editor: I am very much interested in the editorial policy of THE COMMONWEAL. In the field of religion, I have always been impressed by the fairness and sympathy displayed toward the Protestant—an attitude I assumed the editors were peculiarly qualified to possess. This attitude probably made THE COMMONWEAL effective in fields not ordinarily reached by a sectarian paper.

The reader must naturally trust the editorial policy of his favorite magazine in matters with which he cannot be expected to be familiar; but he should be critical of discussions the merits of which are within the scope of his own information. In a very definite sense, the editor is spending the reader's money, and in all questions is expected to employ analysis and criticism which will produce fairness and accuracy—and protection of the reader.

The publication, recently, of an article entitled "The Baby Racket" is disappointing. This is the kind of article that some magazines have published, improperly, without signature. The title suggests the existence of a condition which the "facts" in the article do not indicate—even if the "facts" were not in reality "interpretations" based on such feelings as bitterness, remorse and a desire for revenge—as well as a desire to sell an article to THE COMMONWEAL. Surely the Lewis Memorial Hospital is not in need of this kind of advertising.

I am in a position to supply a statement from the hospital and the obstetrician involved in this article. Or, you may easily obtain the facts yourself. As the one who recommended the hospital, I can say that this advice was freely given on account of friendship.

Much extravagance was enjoyed during the recent years of prosperity, but the buyer was usually as blameworthy as the seller. It seems out of place to be acidulous now.

This letter is entirely in the interests of THE COMMONWEAL and the friendship which it enjoys at present with many of my friends.

R. A. KINSELLA, M.D.

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: After reading THE COMMONWEAL for December 14, 1932, and being disgusted with the article under the caption "The Baby Racket"—I cringe somewhat at its ridiculousness.

I do not believe that you can produce the facts and the authentic names or the place of such a case, and I am of the opinion that the article is a very cheap form of advertisement, about fit for a cheap novel for a curious vulgar class to devour.

It was truly by inspiration that the pure, sweet and devout "scribe" was given divine guidance to the Lewis Memorial Hospital, where she may be able to get such wonderful service; at least she may catch up in her instalments on furniture while she is bringing forth her prolific and wonderfully Catholic children. What a "nit wit" to exploit her knowledge in such a well selected periodical as THE COMMONWEAL, so ardently devoured by authority of that paper by the *New World*.

I am a Catholic physician and have been in practice in this city for thirty-nine and one-half years. I have delivered enough children to populate a large-sized village, and I believe this article to be preposterous. Of course there may be an occasional charlatan in any community, but why that pure, sweet, divine soul (a past scribe) had to seek him out, is remarkably curious.

I have records of the art of obstetrics on not only "scribes" but very distinguished editors in Chicago, and so has every honest man in the medical profession, and these records do not bear out the statements in this abominable article. It is a gross injustice to the medical profession, and I believe it to be an exaggerated falsehood, and a very cheap advertisement of a much criticized institution—an institution which I know is in many cases not carrying out the ethical purposes for which it was created.

When you attack one of the most charitable body of men ever known, a body almost united in extending succor and charity, and a body which is undergoing deprivation hitherto unknown, you are dragging at very tender heartstrings. That is not Catholic teaching and I heartily resent it.

DANIEL H. CUNNINGHAM, M.D.

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Liberty, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In this week's issue of THE COMMONWEAL, my husband called my attention to an article entitled "The Baby Racket," by Katharine Darst. May I say that, as a subscriber of many years standing, I read this article with extreme amazement and chagrin. It is such a poor specimen of literary output that I felt I must have strayed into the field of sensational fiction. It is a cheap affair, and I cannot see any reason for publishing it. Its English is colloquial, to put it mildly, and its writer is in poor taste throughout the entire length of the article.

The young woman fell willingly into the hands of a physician who asked a very high fee for his services, and having paid his fee not once but, I believe, three times, she complains bitterly of having been "gipped." The last baby was born with a very moderate outlay of money. With proper intelligence displayed at the beginning, all the babies could have been as economically brought forth.

My quarrel, however, is not with the very self-satisfied person who apparently believes that she is the only person these days who is not practising birth control, but with my old friend THE COMMONWEAL, which published this very cheap, very blatant, very stupid article

No doubt it is true that the medical field has its extortioners, as all professional fields have, but I happen to know many obstetricians of note whose charity is universal, and I feel that to stigmatize a branch of the medical profession as conducting a so-called "racket" is unjust and rather a serious thing to do; especially when the affair is written up in such an unbearable way. Cardinal Mundelein's splendid scheme for human betterment needs no such propaganda to insure its success.

I am renewing my subscription, but please return to your old standards of literary value. We really are not interested in husbands who climb on and off "wagons" and in the chatter of garrulous, gossipy women.

May I add that my husband is not an obstetrician

LEONORE J. DWORETZKY.

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: In your December 14 issue you have Katharine Darst telling us that she "rode the subways" to save money, ere her babies were born.

I know Chicago, where presumably she lived, or lives, and this past summer my work, writing, took me back there for three months. Where are there any subways in Chicago? She should have told us she rode the "elevated," for, then, her tale would have clicked.

Now: This is not written to be catty, no siree! That sketch rings the bell in every place but the one mentioned.

JANE HOWE-KENNEDY.

Editor's Note: Mrs. Darst's article was published without specific references to dates and places. As a result of the mention accorded the Lewis Memorial Hospital, it seemed to a number of readers that all her experiences had a Chicago background. This is not the case. Her charges were investigated by ourselves, and we have plenty of evidence to show that in the community in which she lived the situation she described was normal. Not one but a thousand women might have written her story. We are glad to learn from the letters printed above that matters never came to such a pass in several parts of the United States. There is no intention of basing upon these experiences a general attack upon the medical profession. Public and practitioner have alike been at fault.

THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Twentieth Century

THE GREASE paint and cardboard, the tinsel and spotlights, the sham and shoddiness and shimmer of the theatre all merge uproariously in "Twentieth Century," the new satirical play by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur. It is based in turn on an original play by Charles Bruce Millholland, but how much of the original idea and dialogue remain in the present version is impossible to discover. What matters mostly is that the joint authors have produced one of the most effective comments on the dingier aspects of the modern commercial theatre that we are likely to see in many moons. The play does not deal gently with realities nor with persons. It passes over nothing in silence. But, on the other hand, it attempts to create no false sympathies. Its chief defect is its unmitigated cynicism.

There are many pleasant and sincere qualities, even in the modern theatre, many honest artists and a few honest producers, much solid effort and considerable idealism. "Twentieth Century" deals only with the mighty shams and the petty insincerities, with the obvious immoralities and the shameless exploitations. Its witty shafts strike only at hypocrisies that need to be struck down. It ignores all else.

The authors have used a Pullman and observation car of the Twentieth Century Limited en route from Chicago to New York as the setting of their spirited satire. On this train are Lily Garland (Eugenie Leontovich), an ex-stage star returning from a sojourn in Hollywood, Oscar Jaffe (Moffat Johnston), Lily's former manager and lover, now intent on regaining her services to recoup his lost fortunes, Jaffe's press and managerial staff, an escaped lunatic with a religious mania, two bearded Germans from a stranded third-rate Passion Play company, and a scattering of nondescript passengers. Jaffe is a combination of several flamboyant Broadway producers of a generation just passing. Even those with short memories will recall that fiasco of a few seasons back when one of the most famous of New York producers exhibited a third-rate Passion Play with all the lavish display and bad taste of a musical comedy. One is not surprised then to find Oscar Jaffe pouncing upon the bearded Germans as the nucleus of a gorgeous production which he can use as the vehicle for Lily Garland's "return." Lily will play Magdalen. What, he asks, could be more appropriate? He will have fifty camels, a half-dozen elephants, lions from the Berlin zoo. It is just a slight mischance that he accepts the backing of the escaped lunatic for this monster spectacle. And it is with the utmost ease that he drops the whole project before the train reaches New York in favor of a new play by Somerset Maugham!

As for Lily—she will return to Jaffe's management if he gives her the contract he once refused to give, including the all-essential feature of a marble bath off her dressing-room, and also if he provides a play in which she can die successfully. It is quite impossible to give in brief outline the whole list of satirical absurdities with which the play is packed, including the rough and ready antics of Jaffe's press agent, and the scenes in which Jaffe plays upon the vanity and temperament of Lily. Suffice it to say that she finally signs the contract when Jaffe has been accidentally and very slightly shot and pretends to be dying.

The extraordinary thing about the play is its basic fidelity to well-known facts and foibles of the theatre. Its exaggera-

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tions are only slight. Its situations and characterizations are always recognizable. The defect, as I have said, lies in the lack of contrasts, in the failure to relieve the picture of the hypocritical theatre with anything that savors of the honest theatre. The fault is one that is common to all untempered satire.

Among the noteworthy aspects of "Twentieth Century" are the ingenious moving settings by Cirker and Robbins, the swift and sure direction by George Abbott, and the incomparably adept acting of Eugenie Leontovich and Moffat Johnston as the two leading characters, and of William Frawley as Jaffe's inimitable press agent. (At the Broadhurst Theatre.)

Dear Jane

FOR THOSE who are too seriously oppressed by the theatrical sham pilloried in "Twentieth Century," I would always advise a number of excursions to Miss Le Gallienne's theatre on Fourteenth Street, where honesty, hard work, devotion and pleasant humor emerge from everything attempted. "Dear Jane," by Eleanor Holmes Hinkley, based on the life of Jane Austen, is not the most successful of Miss Le Gallienne's current repertory, but it has at least four scenes of sheer atmospheric delight, much admirable acting and a shining sincerity. Were it not for a major structural defect in the play itself, which renders the last act rather futile, it would be one of the most delightful exhibitions which this year's theatre furnishes.

Briefly, the play recounts the meeting and near-romance of Jane Austen and Sir John Evelyn—a romance quickly nipped by Jane's discovery that Sir John has very little sympathy with her ambitions to become a novelist. What with scenes at the Steventon parsonage, at the Basingstoke Ballroom the evening of Nelson's victory, at a milliner's shop in Bath and at the famous pump room during a musicale, the play breathes an atmosphere of singular delight and charm. But the authoress fails to prepare us adequately for Jane's final decision. We are led to see her chiefly as a winsome and slightly flirtatious girl, with a rollicking sense of humor and highly romantic ideas. The glamor, charm and honesty of Sir John catch her heart and fancy at once. But we do not see until the last act itself any of that sensitive and passionate devotion to her writing which would make her give up romance entirely for the destiny of a quill pen. The Jane of the first two acts would have too much humor to be vanquished by a mere lack of interest and a slight incredulity. In other words, if the author had not been bound by historical fact to explain Jane Austen's spinsterhood, the play might have turned into a most captivating romance.

But granted the need of ending on a note of renunciation, the reasons for Jane's choice should have been made clear, not only in words and logic, but in emotion and character, and through a process of careful building toward that last scene. Renunciation in the theatre becomes glamorous only when the motive for it is of high consequence and the need for it imperative. As the present play ends, there is no clear-cut need for Jane's decision, either in her own character as previously outlined, or in the attitude of Sir John. One feels he could have been won over easily by a little humor and tact and by the fact of achievement.

Aside from this serious difficulty, the play is one of Miss Le Gallienne's best presentations, with Josephine Hutchinson exquisite as Jane, Miss Le Gallienne modestly excellent as the spinster sister, Cassandra, Joseph Schildkraut admirably glamorous as Sir John, and the entire cast in finest feather. (At the Civic Repertory Theatre.)

BOOKS

Recent Books on Literary Subjects

CRITICAL literature is not flourishing, but there is a good deal of activity and some fine achievement. Virginia Woolf is both a novelist and a commentator; and it would be difficult to say in which rôle she is more widely appreciated. "The Second Common Reader" (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50) contains essays on subjects as varied as Parson Woodeforde and Christina Rossetti. None is very searching, but the obvious (and therewith also the important) things are said exceptionally well. The paper on Donne is a fine example of Miss Woolf at her best. She ignores the thousand and one matters which bring wrinkles to the studious brow, and describes lucidly the several stages of Donne's career. The result is readable and sometimes powerful prose. In the present reviewer's opinion, special worth attaches to what Miss Woolf has to say concerning the novels of Thomas Hardy.

Edmund Blunden is a good poet and an estimable reviewer of books. "Votive Tablets" is made up of notices written for the London *Times* on more or less unfamiliar topics. There is some first-rate and absorbing comment on Shelley's relations with Harriet; a discerning little paper on Churchill, another on Randolph and still another on Herrick; and an affectionate bit about the Laureates. Thus runs the fare in this amiable book. Mr. Blunden is the best of the heirs of Mr. Gosse, but seems to allow less rein to his imagination. Even when his papers are about nothing of importance they are nevertheless pleasantly, and usually solidly, written (New York: Harper and Brothers. $3.50).

Considerably more deliberate of workmanship are the essays in Anne Kimball Tuell's "A Victorian at Bay," which associates general literary reflection with studies of separate authors (Boston: Marshall Jones Company. $2.50). The most interesting part of the book deals with T. E. Brown, that crabbed but splendid poet whose fame is now being somewhat refurbished. There are worth-while passages in almost all the essays, but one meets with an aesthetic posiness for which the present generation has lost all liking. Yet even this generation should get some fun out of "The Youthful Spinster," in which one of the chief conventions of our time is analyzed with real good humor.

Professor Irving Babbitt's "On Being Creative and Other Essays" is now a bit old, but since it failed to receive the more extended notice we had planned for it, the present occasion must serve (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50). The world generally has been too much blinded by its antipathy to observe how extraordinarily interesting a writer Professor Babbitt always is. You may dislike intensely what he has to say, but there is no doubting either that he has something to talk about or that he can hammer it out into prose which lacks charm but has the strength of the "Areopagitica." To dismiss him as "another Brunetière" is to confess unwillingness to read him. The introduction to the present book and the title essay are unusually good. One subject which Babbitt should forbid himself to write about henceforth is Wordsworth. This poet he completely misunderstands, because he is without the proper antennae for comprehension. Broadly speaking, he seems to us a poor critic of poetry and a brilliant commentator on the moralists. This is borne out once more by the somewhat remote but none the less important essay in the present volume on "Schiller as an Aesthetic Theorist." Professor Babbitt has, in our opinion, seldom written to better advantage than here.

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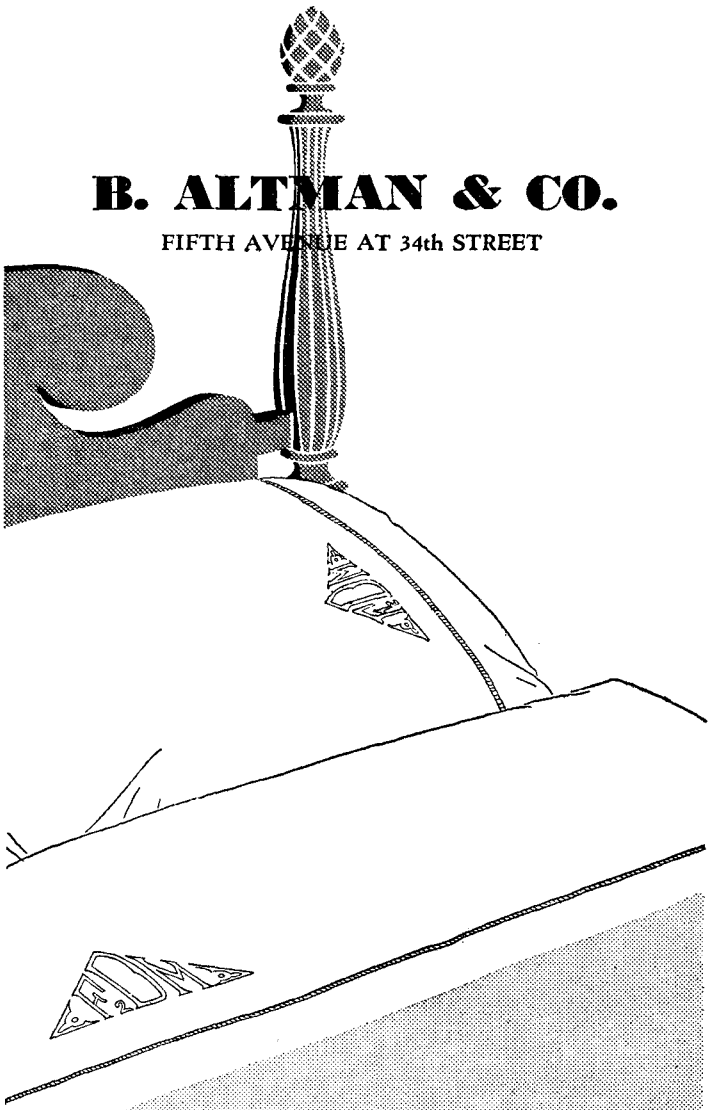
The literary historian will be deeply interested in "The Growth of Literature," by H. Munro Chadwick and N. Kershaw Chadwick, the first volume of which has recently appeared (New York: The Macmillan Company. $6.50). These authors have set for themselves the task of studying literary forms in early literatures with a view of determining the extent to which the existence of general principles operative in literature may be assumed. The volume under consideration is a comparative study of the early literatures of Europe, attention being given to Norse, Teutonic, Irish, Welsh and Greek poetry. Central position is of course given to the heroic age and its sagas, but all aspects of the subject are presented. One of the most competent chapters is that on antiquarian learning. At present only the evidence is offered, conclusions being reserved for a later volume. Such work is of course intended for the scholar. We consider it an undertaking of primary importance.

Of special studies there is no end. Among the most competent is "Pattern and Variation in Poetry," by Chard Powers Smith (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $4.50). Himself a writer of good verse, Mr. Smith believes that the fundamental law of poetry is the blend of variation with pattern. On this basis he works out a detailed study of poetic form which is often very suggestive and occasionally remarkable. In its own way it may fairly claim to be the best book of its kind in English. The specific critical judgments of the author are curious and may be disregarded. What counts is his study of the "laws." Perhaps the book is stodgy now and then, and it is obviously badly composed. But it is nevertheless an important publication, of value to everybody whom poetry interests.

Of very real interest to all lovers of Americana is the fine edition of "Les Natchez" which Professor Chinard has just published (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. $3.50). We have several times commented upon the admirable research being done by this scholar whose domain is the literature in which France and the United States meet. Now it seems that the present edition of Chateaubriand's most striking, and in some respects curious, work is the best thing Professor Chinard has done. All his notes are factual and illuminating. The preface is a model of restraint and dispassionate judgment. Thus the intrinsic value of a notable old book is greatly enhanced for the modern reader. Because printing and binding were done abroad, the price is exceptionally low for so attractive and portly a volume. It is needless to add that both text and commentary are in French.

"Three Chaucer Studies" (New York: Oxford University Press. $3.50) groups Chaucerian dissertations prepared under the direction of Professor Carleton Brown, of New York University. While the book is necessarily intended for the specialist, no harm will be done in telling the general reader what is offered. Mr. Russell Krauss challenges various theories concerning Chaucer's marriage and reputed appointment as forester of Petherton, managing to throw new light on both matters. Of particular interest is his study of the heraldic decorations on Thomas Chaucer's tomb. Haldeen Braddy offers a new and almost convincing interpretation of the historical allegory which seems to underlie "The Parlement of Foules." The proper ordering of the "Canterbury Tales" is a topic upon which C. Robert Case has expended ingenuity and labor. All the studies are competent, and Aldeen Braddy's is even something more than that.

Other publications include: "American Literature: 1880-1930," a survey which is chiefly concerned with modern developments (The Dial Press. $2.50). The section on contemporary verse is valuable. "A Theatre Library," a bibliography



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NEXT WEEK

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS NEW AND OLD, by Michael O'Shaughnessy, envisages the Congress of the United States creating, through trade associations, without in any way altering the anti-trust laws, monopolies in the major industries. Such monopolies would be under the supervision of a federal authority and would have the right to fix prices, stabilize wages for capital and labor and conduct production with some relation to demand. These trade associations, or guilds, the author believes would preserve as great a measure of individualism for the citizen as is consistent with modern conditions. . . . THE SAD STATE OF CUBA, by Walter E. Hardin, is a factual story of what amounts possibly to the events leading up to a revolution. . . . THE SECRET OF JOAN OF ARC, by H. A. Jules-Bois, is a scholarly and colorful paper on the alleged discovery that Joan of Arc came into her extraordinary power over the armies of the Dauphin because she was able to tell him "that she was one of the family!" This romantic story is at present arousing animated discussions in France, and M. Jules-Bois reviews the evidence presented to prove that Joan was not a simple country maid but an illegitimate scion of the house of Orleans. . . . LEISURE WITH A VENGEANCE, by Joseph J. Cowan, is a brief and startling revelation of the plight of great numbers of young men and women who have fallen back on their families for food and shelter, have no money and no outlets for energies or aptitudes and are in danger of miserable deterioration. . . . THE SELF-SUPPORTING STUDENT, by John W. Rickord, tells from experience and several years of opportunity to gage and reflect, of the advisability of a student's working his way through college.

of books relating to the theatre, has been compiled, with brief explanatory notes, by Rosamond Gilder (New York: Theatre Arts. $1.00). "Nogaku: Japanese No Plays," by Beatrice Lane Suzuki, offers examples of these charming little dramas, together with an interesting commentary. The book has a Buddhistic undertow (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $1.25). The Reverend John R. Hagan and Alice C. Hagan have prepared a school edition of Cardinal Wiseman's "Fabiola," a beautiful old story which must not be allowed to sink into oblivion (New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $1.00). "How to Say It—Correctly," by W. L. Mason, is a volume in which words frequently confused are inspected and treated to recommendations, sometimes amusing. This is the book for those whom "shall" and "will," or others like them, trouble continually (New York: A. L. Burt Company. $1.50).

T. C.

Speculating

The Great American Land Bubble, by A. N. Sakolski. New York: Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

THERE is an anecdote of comparatively recent date, which is rather pertinent to the spirit in which this book seems to be written. There was, it appears, a controversy in the Catholic Church concerning the policy of a "white" hierarchy and clergy as against a "native" Church. The disputants were to argue their cases before the Pope. While waiting for them, the Pope is said to have remarked rather dryly: "I wonder how in the world these reverend gentlemen suppose the Church ever got started? If it had not been for 'native' churches we should still all be Jews!"

I feel that way about this sort of book, presenting as it does a picture of "land-grabbing, speculation and booms from colonial days to the present time," and of "fraud, dreams of power, bankruptcy, gambling in continents, vast riches and debtor's prison" which (according to the publishers) "ring the changes in the lust of land in American history." One is inclined to wonder, as the Pope is said to have wondered, at so devastating a lack of perspective. One wonders how in the world very new American citizens think America ever got started.

With every such "new presentation" of "American history" it becomes overwhelmingly certain that American history is either not taught at all, or that in the rare spots where its teaching still lingers, it has assumed something of the aspect of the history of some rather ignoble savage tribe, now happily extinct.

There was most certainly a moment in our history when this continent, claimed by three European powers, represented nothing else but land. What the present day industrial proletarian school of thought does not seem to grasp is, that at that same moment the feudal system on which European civilization rested was dying, but was not yet wholly dead. Its traditions were still living in men's minds and its basic tradition was land. The bourgeois order was only just breaking through a system of society and government rooted in land. Land, as the basis of wealth, society, government, was losing its place, but it revived as such here. Land was the necessary basis of colonization, but land was not enough. Various attempts were made during the Tudor reigns to drop shiploads of people on the North Atlantic coast of America and let them take all the land they wanted. They perished. It became plain that, to found permanent colonies of men, it was necessary to have the backing of capital.

Land was granted then to persons with capital: to individuals,

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groups of men, or corporations. It is true that the early charters by which these grants are guaranteed are not easily intelligible today, for they are written in seventeenth-century English mixed with feudal legal terminology. I have even seen teachers who did not grasp the meaning of these charters until it had been suggested that they look up the words in Blackstone's "Commentaries." To assert, as does the author of this book, that they were "revocable at the royal will" would indicate that he has not read or understood either the charters or the Declaration of Independence.

American history is not intelligible without understanding the charters—which the drafters of the Declaration of Independence called "our constitution."

Having been granted land in large tracts, the next step in colonizing was for capitalists to bring people to settle on this land. It is quite obvious that those who had invested capital for this purpose should want a return on their money. The remarkable part of what was a business operation is that those capitalists made it a vehicle for a new political and social life as well. That also is in "the record." It has not hitherto been claimed that it was not "democratic." We have rather prided ourselves that it was very soundly democratic.

That is the way we got started. The start was made by individual effort. Later, all "excess" land claims having been ceded to the Confederation of Sovereign States which had evolved from a business venture, Congress worked out a plan to continue the same process and procure the settlement of new colonies by land grants west of the Alleghenies, which should grow to be territories and ultimately, to be sovereign states, full sisters of the creating Confederation.

To those Americans who have never been anything else but Americans and who have no predilections among foreign nations, such books as this are disturbing. It is almost possible to suspect a definite, consistent effort to wipe out everything we created here by painting it all as one long, sordid orgy of graft. That attitude may be set down to the inevitable ignorance produced by mass schooling. It has certainly been caused in part by the municipal, state and federal corruption attending mass importation and mass exploitation of "cheap" European labor since the Civil War, which brought the new European industrial proletarian outlook into our agricultural society.

It is not amazing that such books should be written, for the mentality that produced them is our own fault. It is only amazing that reputable publishers should spread them, unless one assumes that publishers are only interested in what will sell, and are aware that anything will sell today which belittles the principles upon which consciously free men once built a political and social system for free men—and opened it to all the world, but neglected to teach new comers its meaning and risk ending by forgetting it themselves.

This is an ignorant book. Standing alone it is not in any way an important book. Expressing (as it seems to me it does) a wide-spread conviction that America is a rotten fruit and that it has been so from the beginning, I think this is just one more deplorable book, because it is written with an appearance of erudition.

Free speech is part of our inheritance, and we have passed it on and shared it with "the downtrodden and oppressed of all the world" (as Mr. Alfred Smith put it recently)—but free speech can become a menace to free institutions if free men lose their critical faculty, and if their sole criterion of excellence lies in the answer to the questions: Will it get by? Will it sell?

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

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by Cecily Hallack

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The Knife

Let's Operate, by Roy H. McKay and Norman Beasley. New York: Ray Long and Richard R. Smith. $3.00.

SINCE the success of Dr. Axel Munthe's "Story of San Michele" as a best seller in three or four modern languages, publishers have been looking for other physicians with vivid imaginations and a very favorable opinion of themselves to write a successor for it. Munthe's book was fictional to a very great extent, and some of it quite absurd. It was such another imposition on the public as Joan Lowell's famous sea story, but they both caught on. On first reading, this volume would seem to be just another book of that kind, only here a ghost writer collaborated with the doctor and probably inserted most of the fictional details so palpably present.

But there is much more than that in Dr. McKay's book, though not a little of it must be taken with more than the proverbial grain of salt. The doctor is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and therefore holds a definitely recognized place in the medical profession. He has seen a great many abuses in the practice of medicine and especially of surgery in which he himself is most interested, and he proceeds to tell the public about them, though his introduction consists just of the words, "This book was written with great reluctance."

He does not hesitate to say that "too many of the ear, nose and throat specialists do not know their specialty," and above all that they are ever ready to operate and often do more harm than good. Dr. McKay includes other specialists in his deprecation, however, and the heading of one of his chapters is, "The Damage Many Specialists Do," which concludes with the sentence, "We are much in need of fewer specialists and more family doctors."

The book is likely to do much more harm than good, however, because it will almost inevitably lead many readers to the conclusion that the abuses are so frequent in the medical profession that it is almost hopeless to secure proper treatment. The medical profession in the last fifty years has reduced the death rate to such an extent that, while the average age at death used to be scarcely more than forty, it is now a little more than sixty. The greatest surgeon in Europe in 1870 refused to operate in a large municipal hospital because his death rate had been nearly 80 percent, that is, four out of five of his patients died. Surgery used to be confined largely to hopeless cases and as a last resort. It has now become life saving to such an extent as to add many years of health and usefulness to lives that were otherwise doomed to end. From the abuse of a thing no argument holds against its use, and Stevenson's expression, after years of personal experience with them, that the physician is the flower of our civilization, such as it is holds good.

Dr. McKay is rather loose in the application of his moral principles to medical practice. He calls attention to the fact that probably over 50,000 criminal abortions occur in New York City every year, that is, operations in which the life of an unborn child is taken deliberately. They must be added to the ever-increasing number of adult murders that are committed among us. The principles stated in this volume would surely not tend to lessen that number. The whole subject of morality, especially sex morality, is treated with a looseness that would make young readers particularly have the feeling that human nature is so constituted that moral lapses can scarcely be avoided.

One of the serious factors in medical professional life in this country, which Dr. McKay does not emphasize, is that we have too many physicians and a great many of them have very little

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education and have been allowed to slip through medical school unprepared for the real problems of medical practice. As a result of the surplus, the average earning of a physician in the United States at the present time is below what may be called the dead-line of a living wage for themselves and families. This is the root of many abuses.

JAMES J. WALSH.

Napoleon's Machiavelli

Talleyrand, by Duff Cooper. New York: Harper and Brothers. $3.75.

IT IS odd that in the flood of biographies which has inundated the English-speaking world during the last decade there should have been none of Talleyrand. Here was a subject simply crying out for dramatization in the manner of our neo-Stracheys, a subject which our bright young modern biographers could dress up, and cut capers with, and turn inside out, but principally upside down, to their hearts' content. And yet they did not do it. It has remained for Duff Cooper to take up Talleyrand, and Mr. Cooper has proved himself not in the least a modernist. This doesn't mean that his biography isn't readable or interesting—it is superlatively so; in fact it is one of the ablest and most brilliantly written monographs of recent years. It simply means that Mr. Cooper takes his subject rather than himself seriously, and that, with due allowance made for his initial conservative bias, he presents us both a living man in his chief protagonist, and an analysis of that man's actions which to a large extent justify Mr. Cooper's arraignment of the judgment generally passed on the character and ideals of Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord.

That Mr. Cooper intends to whitewash Talleyrand is far from the case. He presents him with all his duplicity, sensuality, his utter lack of enthusiasm, his scepticism, his disbelief in human altruism, yet he tries to show that his apparent twistings and betrayals of his allies were the result of a consistent policy, and that that policy wasn't altogether the determination that Charles-Maurice himself should always turn up on top.

Mr. Cooper's Talleyrand is far from a mere opportunist. He is a statesman, utterly devoid of passion for any abstract idea, who sees things clearly and steadily, who hates war and bloodshed, and whose one idea is to bring a moderate amount of liberty to France and to restrain her whenever she seems embarked on any course of exaggerated nationalism. It was because he saw how impossible were the policies of the *ancien régime* that he joined the forces of the Revolution. Yet when he sensed the approach of the Terror, he had himself transferred outside of France. Likewise he recognized in Napoleon the force which could bring order and unity back to France, but when he realized that ambition was leading the Emperor to destruction, he prudently took steps to hasten the day when France should recover from its militaristic orgy.

Of course he usually kept his own welfare in view, but Mr. Cooper contends that this was incidental to his larger view. That he had this larger view is unquestionable; but that it was usually the view rather than the ego which dominated may be doubted. Of course in the last analysis what is good for the race is usually good for the individual, and in this regard Talleyrand proved his wisdom in seeing the former. But that a man so utterly cynical as he, really was a servant in the army of the good seems a little too much to believe. He was a man of intellect rather than of heart. At all events, Mr. Cooper has written a memorable book about an extraordinary man.

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Briefer Mention

English Lyrics of the XIIIth Century; edited by Carleton Brown. New York: Oxford University Press. $3.00.

THOSE who know Professor Brown's excellent anthology of fourteenth-century English verse will know what to expect in the present volume. It is edited with painstaking exactness, the notes are succinct and learned, and the array of lyrics includes some not previously published. The wealth of poetry which thus presents itself is astonishing, though of course no one would expect the English thirteenth century to offer a body of poetry comparable to that written under Elizabeth or Victoria. Perhaps the chief discovery made by Professor Brown is the prevalence of secular verse in an era hitherto closely associated with religion. The present reviewer cannot agree, however, that the quality of the secular poems is as high as the quality of the best religious poems. By way of criticism it may be suggested that this anthologist indulges in captious and pedantic remarks about other scholars—remarks unworthy of so first-rate a man as he is. As a whole the anthology is indispensable to all students and lovers of English verse.

Touring Utopia, by Frances Theresa Russell. New York: The Dial Press. $2.50.

THE FASCINATION of Utopia never dims. And one may say that Miss Russell's book, written to outline the worlds envisioned by almost numberless reformers, conserves a great deal of the charm of the subject. She has painstakingly gathered together all the utopias she could find, and her bibliography makes one long for that now utterly utopian thing, an income, and nothing else to do but read. The book itself is an analysis of the literature under several topic heads, among which are government, education, morality, domesticity and art. Miss Russell writes with distinct charm and deftness, never ignoring the serious implications of the theme but giving free rein to a tranquil sense of humor. Hers is accordingly a genuinely delightful treatise. A critic might object that she has ignored one great source of Utopianism—the Joachimite teaching which swept the Renaissance world off its feet. To go into that, however, would necessitate a heavier, and therewith probably a duller, book.

CONTRIBUTORS

WILLIAM C. MURPHY, JR., is with the Washington Bureau of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger.*

A. K. PARKER is a poet and critic residing in New York.

REV. RUSSELL WILBUR is pastor of the Church of Notre Dame de Lourdes, St. Louis, Mo.

MARGARET WILLIAMSEN is a Minneapolis journalist.

THEODORE MAYNARD is an English poet and critic residing in America. He is the author of "Exile," "The Book of Modern Catholic Verse" and "The Book of Modern Catholic Prose."

STANLEY B. JAMES, lecturer and journalist, is the author of "Adventures of a Spiritual Tramp."

ERIN SAMSON, formerly a member of the Trinity College faculty, and later attached to the Catholic University of Paris, is now lecturing in the United States.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS, formerly in the American diplomatic service, is the author of "Undiplomatic Memories."

JAMES J. WALSH, M.D., writer and lecturer, is the author of "The Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries" and other books.

GRENVILLE VERNON, author of "The Image in the Path," is a publisher and a critic of literature and music.

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